TWILIGHT
STORIES
By MARGARET SYDNEY - SUSAN COOLIDGE
JOAQUIN MILLER - AMY TERESE POWELSON · ETC.

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MARGARET SYDNEY, SUSAN COOLIDGE, JOAQUIN MILLER, AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN," MRS. AMY THERESE POWELSON, Etc.

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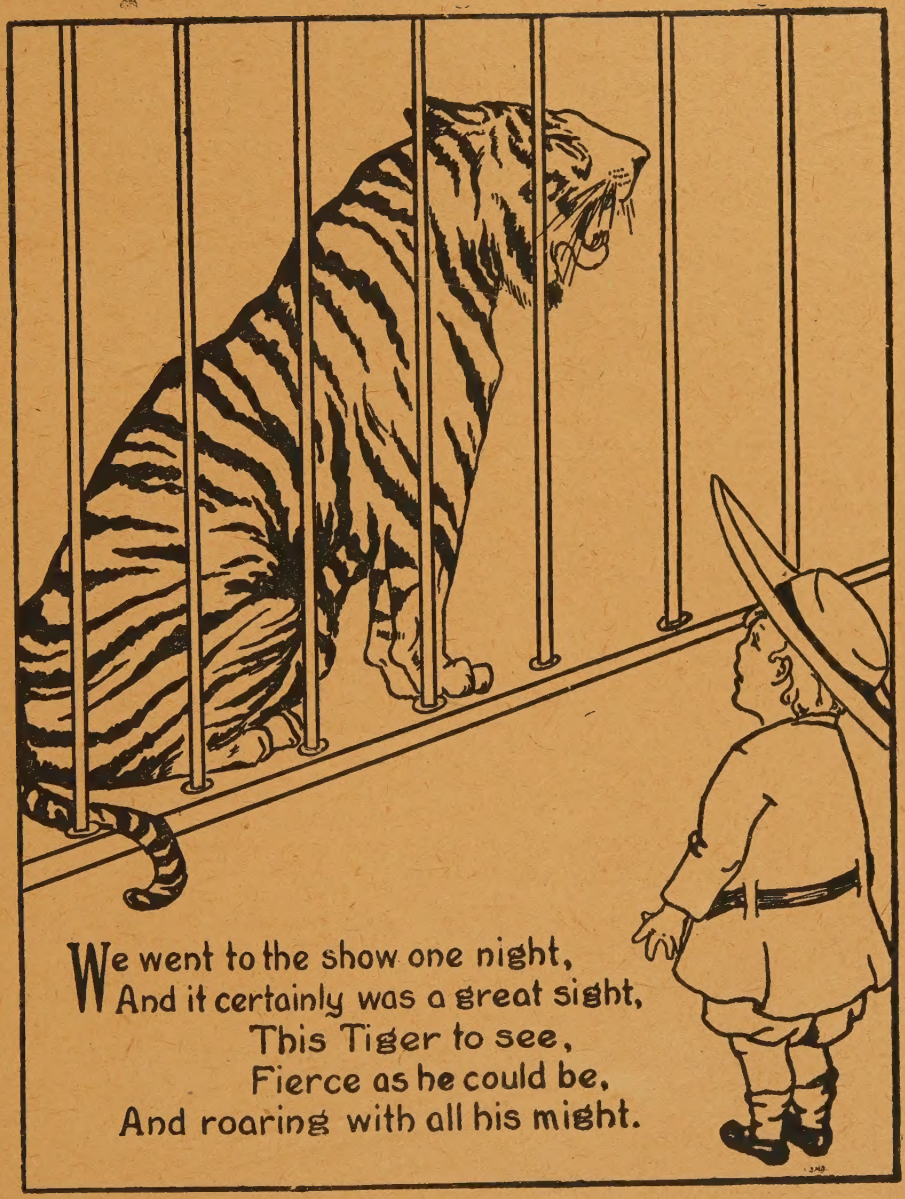


We went to the show one night,
And it certainly was a great sight,
This Tiger to see,
Fierce as he could be,
And roaring with all his might.

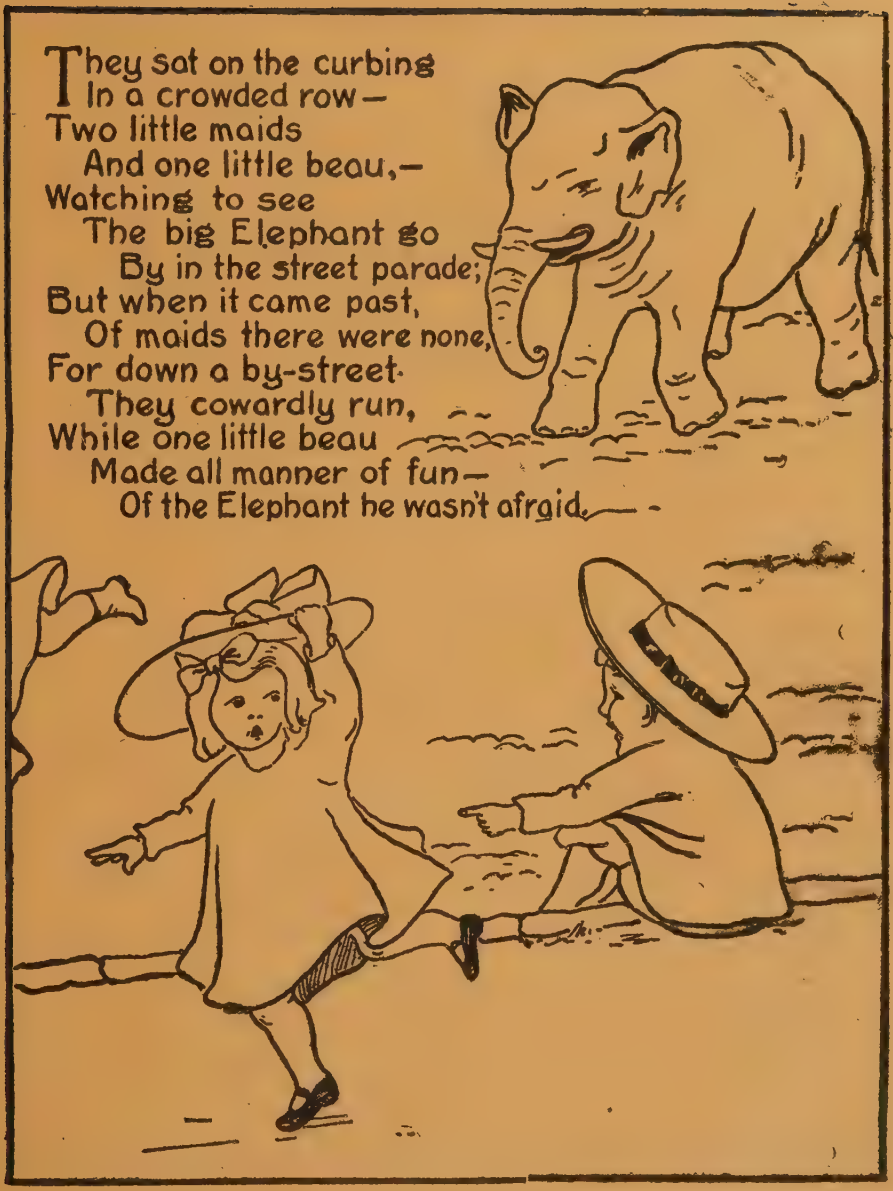
CHRISTMAS DAY.

THE Christmas chimes are pealing high
Beneath the solemn Christmas sky,
And blowing winds their notes prolong
Like echoes from an angel's song;
Good will and peace, peace and good will
Ring out the carols glad and gay,
Telling the heavenly message still
That Christ the Child was born to-day.

In lowly hut and palace hall
Peasant and king keep festival,
And childhood wears a fairer guise,
And tenderer shine all mother-eyes;
The aged man forgets his years,
The mirthful heart is doubly gay,
The sad are cheated of their tears,
For Christ the Lord was born to-day.

SUSAN COOLIDGE.

They sat on the curbing
In a crowded row—
Two little maids
And one little beau,—
Watching to see
The big Elephant go
By in the street parade;
But when it came past,
Of maids there were none,
For down a by-street
They cowardly run,
While one little beau
Made all manner of fun—
Of the Elephant he wasn't afraid.



THE ONLY WOMAN IN THE TOWN.

ONE hundred years and one ago, in Boston, at ten of the clock one April night, a church steeple had been climbed and a lantern hung out.

At ten, the same night, in mid-river of the Charles, oarsmen two, with passenger silent and grim, had seen the signal light out-swung, and rowed with speed for the Charlestown shore.

At eleven, the moon was risen, and the grim passenger, Paul Revere, had ridden up the Neck, encountered a foe, who opposed his ride into the country, and, after a brief delay, rode on, leaving a British officer lying in a clay pit.

At mid-night, a hundred ears had heard the flying horseman cry, "Up and arm. The Regulars are coming out!"

You know the story well. You have heard how the wild alarm ran from voice to voice and echoed beneath every roof, until the men of Lexington and Concord were stirred and aroused with patriotic fear for the safety of the public stores that had been committed to their keeping.

You know how, long ere the chill April day began to dawn, they had drawn, by horse power and by hand power, the cherished stores into safe hiding-places in the depth of friendly forest-coverts.

There is one thing about that day that you have *not* heard and I will tell you now. It is, how one little woman staid in the town of Concord, whence all the women save her had fled.

All the houses that were standing then, are very old-fashioned now, but there was one dwelling-place on Concord Common that was old-fashioned even then! It was the abode of

Martha Moulton and "Uncle John." Just who "Uncle John" was, is not now known, but he was probably Martha Moulton's uncle. The uncle, it appears by record, was eighty-five years old; while the niece was *only* three-score and eleven.

Once and again that morning, a friendly hand had pulled the latch-string at Martha Moulton's kitchen entrance and offered to convey herself and treasures away, but, to either proffer, she had said: "No, I must stay until Uncle John gets the cricks out of his back, if all the British soldiers in the land march into town.

At last, came Joe Devins, a lad of fifteen years—Joe's two astonished eyes peered for a moment into Martha Moulton's kitchen, and then eyes and owner dashed into the room, to learn, what the sight he there saw, could mean.

"Whew! Mother Moulton, what are you doing?"

"I'm getting Uncle John his breakfast to be sure, Joe," she answered. "Have *you* seen so many sights this morning that you don't know breakfast, when you see it? Have a care there, for hot fat *will* burn," as she deftly poured the contents of a pan, fresh from the fire, into a dish.

Hungry Joe had been astir since the first drum had beat to arms at two of the clock. He gave one glance at the boiling cream and the slices of crisp pork swimming in it, as he gasped forth the words, "Getting breakfast in Concord *this* morning! *Mother Moulton,* you *must* be crazy."

"So they tell me," she said, serenely. "There comes Uncle John!" she added, as the clatter of a staff on the stone steps of the stairway outrang, for an instant, the cries of hurrying and confusion that filled the air of the street.

"Don't you know, Mother Moulton," Joe went on to say, "that every single woman and child have been carried off, where the Britishers won't find 'em?"

"I don't believe the king's troops have stirred out of Boston," she replied, going to the door leading to the stone staircase, to open it for Uncle John.

"Don't believe it?" and Joe looked, as he echoed the words, as though only a boy could feel sufficient disgust at such want of common sense, in full view of the fact, that Reuben Brown had just brought the news that eight men had been killed by the king's Red-coats, in Lexington, which fact he made haste to impart.

"I won't believe a word of it," she said, stoutly, "until I see the soldiers coming."

"Ah! Hear that!" cried Joe, tossing back his hair and swinging his arms triumphantly at an airy foe. "You won't have to wait long. *That signal* is for the minute men. They are going to march out to meet the Red-coats. Wish I was a minute man, this minute."

Meanwhile, poor Uncle John was getting down the steps of the stairway, with many a grimace and groan. As he touched the floor, Joe, his face beaming with excitement and enthusiasm, sprang to place a chair for him at the table, saying, "Good morning," at the same moment.

"May be," groaned Uncle John, "youngsters *like you* may think it is a good morning, but *I don't,* such a din and clatter as the fools have kept up all night long. If I had the power" (and now the poor old man fairly groaned with rage), "I'd make 'em quiet long enough to let an old man get a wink of sleep, when the rheumatism lets go."

"I'm real sorry for you," said Joe, "but you don't know the news. The king's troops, from camp, in Boston, are marching right down here, to carry off all our arms that they can find."

"Are they?" was the sarcastic rejoined. "It's the best news I've heard in a long while. Wish they had my arms, this min-

ute. They wouldn't carry them a step farther than they could help, I know. Run and tell them mine are ready, Joe."

"But, Uncle John, wait till after breakfast, you'll want to use them once more," said Martha Moulton, trying to help him into the chair that Joe had placed on the white sanded floor.

Meanwhile, Joe Devins had ears for all the sounds that penetrated the kitchen from out of doors, and he had eyes for the slices of well-browned pork and the golden hued Johnny-cake lying before the glowing coals on the broad hearth.

As the little woman bent to take up the breakfast, Joe, intent on doing some kindness for her in the way of saving treasures, asked, "Shan't I help you, Mother Moulton?"

"I reckon I am not so old that I can't lift a mite of corn-bread," she replied with chilling severity.

"Oh, I didn't mean to lift *that thing,*" he made haste to explain, "but to carry off things and hide 'em away, as everybody else has been doing half the night. I know a first-rate place up in the woods. Used to be a honey tree, you know, and it's just as hollow as anything. Silver spoons and things would be just as safe in it—" but Joe's words were interrupted by unusual tumult on the street and he ran off to learn the news, intending to return and get the breakfast that had been offered to him.

Presently he rushed back to the house with cheeks aflame and eyes ablaze with excitement. "They're a coming!" he cried. "They're in sight down by the rocks. They see 'em marching, the men on the hill, do!"

"You don't mean that its really true that the soldiers are coming here, *right into our town,*" cried Martha Moulton, rising in haste and bringing together with rapid flourishes to right and to left, every fragment of silver on the table. Uncle John strove to hold fast his individual spoon, but she twitched it with-

out ceremony out from his rheumatic old fingers, and ran next to the parlor cupboard, wherein lay her movable valuables.

"What in the world shall I do with them," she cried, returning with her apron well filled with treasures, and borne down by the weight thereof.

"Give 'em to me," cried Joe. "Here's a basket, drop 'em in, and I'll run like a brush-fire through the town and across the old bridge, and hide 'em as safe as a weasel's nap."

Joe's fingers were creamy; his mouth was half filled with Johnny-cake, and his pocket on the right bulged to its utmost capacity with the same, as he held forth the basket; but the little woman was afraid to trust him, as she had been afraid to trust her neighbors.

"No! No!" she replied, to his repeated offers. "I know what I'll do. You, Joe Devins, stay right where you are till I come back, and, don't you ever *look* out of the window."

"Dear, dear me!" she cried, flushed and anxious when she was out of sight of Uncle John and Joe. I *wish* I'd given 'em to Col. Barrett when he was here before daylight, only, I *was* afraid I should never get sight of them again."

She drew off one of her stockings, filled it, tied the opening at the top with a string—plunged stocking and all into a pail full of water and proceeded to pour the contents into the well.

Just as the dark circle had closed over the blue stockings, Joe Devin's face peered down the depths by her side, and his voice sounded out the words: "O Mother Moulton, the British will search the wells the *very* first thing. Of course, they *expect* to find things in wells!"

"Why didn't you tell me before, Joe? but now it is too late."

"I would, if I'd known what you was going to do; they'd been a sight safer, in the honey tree."

"Yes, and what a fool I've been—flung *my watch* into the well with the spoons!"

"Well, well! Don't stand there, looking," as she hovered over the high curb, with her hand on the bucket. Everybody will know, if you do, there."

"Martha! Martha?" shrieked Uncle John's quavering voice from the house door.

"Bless my heart!" she exclaimed, hurrying back over the stones.

"What's the matter with your heart?" questioned Joe.

"Nothing. I was thinking of Uncle John's money," she answered.

"Has he got money?" cried Joe. "I thought he was poor, and you took care of him because you were so good"

Not one word that Joe uttered did the little woman hear. She was already by Uncle John's side and asking him for the key to his strong box.

Uncle John's rheumatism was terribly exasperating. "No, I won't give it to you!" he cried, "and nobody shall have it as long as I'm above ground."

"Then the soldiers will carry it off," she said.

"Let 'em!" was his reply, grasping his staff firmly with both hands and gleaming defiance out of his wide, pale eyes. "*You* won't get the key, even if they do."

At this instant, a voice at the doorway shouted the words, "Hide, hide away somewhere, Mother Moulton, for the Redcoats are in sight this minute!"

She heard the warning, and giving one glance at Uncle John, which look was answered by another, "no, you won't have it," she grasped Joe Devins by the collar of his jacket and thrust him before her up the staircase, so quickly that the boy

had no chance to speak, until she released her hold at the entrance to Uncle John's room.

The idea of being taken prisoner in such a manner, and by a woman, too, was too much for the lad's endurance. "Let me go?" he cried, the instant he could recover his breath. "I won't hide away in your garret, like a woman, I won't. I want to see the militia and the minute men fight the troops, I do."

"Help me first, Joe. Here, quick now; let's get this box out and up garret. We'll hide it under the corn and it'll be safe," she coaxed.

The box was under Uncle John's bed.

"What's in the old thing any how?" questioned Joe, pulling with all his strength at it.

The box, or chest, was painted red, and was bound about by massive iron bands.

"I've never seen the inside of it," said Mother Moulton. "It holds the poor old soul's sole treasure, and I *do* want to save it for him if I can."

They had drawn it with much hard endeavor, as far as the garret stairs, but their united strength failed to lift it. "Heave it, now!" cried Joe, and lo! it was up two steps. So they turned it over and over with many a thudding thump; every one of which thumps Uncle John heard, and believed to be strokes upon the box itself to burst it asunder, until it was fairly shelved on the garret floor.

In the very midst of the overturnings, a voice from below had been heard crying out, "Let my box alone! Don't break it open. If you do, I'll—I'll—" but, whatever the poor man *meant* to threaten as a penalty, he could not think of anything half severe enough to say and so left it uncertain as to the punishment that might be looked for.

"Poor old soul!" ejaculated the little woman, her soft white

curls in disorder and the pink color rising from her cheeks to her fair forehead, as she bent to help Joe drag the box beneath the rafter's edge.

"Now, Joe," she said. "we'll heap nubbins over it, and if the soldiers want corn they'll take good ears and never think of touching poor nubbins; so they fell to work throwing corn over the red chest, until it was completely concealed from view.

Then he sprang to the high-up-window ledge in the point of the roof and took one glance out. "Oh, I see them, the Redcoats. True's I live, there go the militia *up the hill.* I thought they was going to stand and defend. Shame on 'em, I say." Jumping down and crying back to Mother Moulton, "I'm going to stand by the minute men," he went down, three steps at a leap, and nearly overturned Uncle John on the stairs, who, with many groans was trying to get to the defense of his strong box.

"What did you help her for, you scamp," he demanded of Joe, flourishing his staff unpleasantly near the lad's head.

"'Cause she asked me to, and couldn't do it alone," returned Joe, dodging the stick and disappearing from the scene, at the very moment Martha Moulton encountered Uncle John.

"Your strong box is safe under nubbins in the garret, unless the house burns down, and now that you are up here, you had better stay," she added soothingly, as she hastened by him to reach the kitchen below.

Once there, she paused a second or two to take resolution regarding her next act. She knew full well that there was not one second to spare, and yet she stood looking, apparently, into the glowing embers on the hearth. She was flushed and excited, both by the unwonted toil, and the coming events, Cobwebs from the rafters had fallen on her hair and home-spun dress, and would readily have betrayed her late occupation, to any discerning soldier of the king.

A smile broke suddenly over her face, displacing for a brief second every trace of care. "It's my only weapon, and I must use it," she said, making a stately courtesy to an imaginary guest and straightway disappeared within an adjoining room. With buttoned door and dropped curtains the little woman made haste to array herself in her finest raiment. In five minutes she reappeared in the kitchen, a picture pleasant to look at. In all New England, there could not be a more beautiful little old lady than Martha Moulton was that day. Her hair was guiltless now of cobwebs, but haloed her face with fluffy little curls of silvery whiteness, above which, like a crown, was a little cap of dotted muslin, pure as snow. Her erect figure, not a particle of the hard-working-day in it now, carried well the folds of a sheeny, black silk gown, over which she had tied an apron as spotless as the cap.

As she fastened back her gown and hurried away the signs of the breakfast she had not eaten, the clear pink tints seemed to come out with added beauty of coloring in her cheeks; while her hair seemed fairer and whiter than at any moment in her three-score and eleven years.

Once more Joe Devins looked in. As he caught a glimpse of the picture she made, he paused to cry out: "All dressed up to meet the robbers! My, how fine you do look! I wouldn't. I'd go and hide behind the nubbins. They'll be here in less than five minutes now," he cried, "and I'm going over the North Bridge to see what's going on there."

"O Joe, stay, won't you?" she urged, but the lad was gone, and she was left alone to meet the foe, comforting herself with the thought, "They'll treat me with more respect if I *look* respectable, and if I *must* die, I'll die good-looking in my best clothes, anyhow."

She threw a few sticks of hickory-wood on the embers, and

then drew out the little round stand, on which the family Bible was always lying. Recollecting that the British soldiers probably belonged to the Church of England, she hurried away to fetch Uncle John's "prayer-book."

"They'll have respect to me, if they find me reading that, I know," she thought. Having drawn the round stand within sight of the well, and where she could also command a view of the staircase, she sat and waited for coming events.

Uncle John was keeping watch of the advancing troops from an upper window. "Martha," he called, "you'd better come up. They're close by, now." To tell the truth, Uncle John himself was a little afraid; that is to say he hadn't quite courage enough to go down, and, perhaps, encounter his own rheumatism and the king's soldiers on the same stairway, and yet, he felt that he must defend Martha as well as he could.

The rap of a musket, quick and ringing on the front door, startled the little woman from her apparent devotions. She did not move at the call of anything so profane. It was the custom of the time to have the front door divided into two parts, the lower half and the upper half. The former was closed and made fast, the upper could be swung open at will.

The soldier getting no reply, and doubtless thinking that the house was deserted, leaped over the chained lower half of the door.

At the clang of his bayonet against the brass trimmings, Martha Moulton groaned in spirit, for, if there was any one thing that she deemed essential to her comfort in this life, it was to keep spotless, speckless and in every way unharmed, the great knocker on her front door.

"Good, sound English metal, too," she thought, "that an English soldier ought to know how to respect."

As she heard the tramp of coming feet she only bent the

closer over the Book of Prayer that lay open on her knee. Not one word did she read or see; she was inwardly trembling and outwardly watching the well and the staircase. But now, above all other sounds, broke the noise of Uncle John's staff thrashing the upper step of the staircase, and the shrill tremulous cry of the old man defiant, doing his utmost for the defense of his castle.

The fingers that lay beneath the book tingled with desire to box the old man's ears, for the policy he was pursuing would be fatal to the treasure in garret and in well; but she was forced to silence and inactivity.

As the King's troops, Major Pitcairn at their head, reached the open door and saw the old lady, they paused. What could they do but look, for a moment, at the unexpected sight that met their view; a placid old lady in black silk and dotted muslin, with all the sweet solemnity of morning devotion hovering about the tidy apartment and seeming to centre at the round stand by which she sat, this pretty woman, with pink and white face surmounted with fleecy little curls and crinkles and wisps of floating whiteness, who looked up to meet their gaze with such innocent prayer-suffused eyes.

"Good morning, Mother," said Major Pitcairn, raising his hat.

"Good morning, gentlemen and soldiers," returned Martha Moulton. "You will pardon my not meeting you at the door, when you see that I was occupied in rendering service to the Lord of all." She reverently closed the book, laid it on the table, and arose, with a stately bearing, to demand their wishes.

"We're hungry, good woman," spoke the commander, "and your hearth is the only hospitable one we've seen since we left Boston. With your good leave I'll take a bit of this, and he

stooped to lift up the Johnny-cake that had been all this while on the hearth.

"I wish I had something better to offer you," she said, making haste to fetch plates and knives from the corner-cupboard, and all the while she was keeping eye-guard over the well. "I'm afraid the Concorders haven't left much for you to-day," she added, with a soft sigh of regret, as though she really felt sorry that such brave men and good soldiers had fallen on hard times in the ancient town. At the moment she had brought forth bread and baked beans, and was putting them on the table, a voice rang into the room, causing every eye to turn toward Uncle John. He had gotten down the stairs without uttering one audible groan, and was standing, one step above the floor of the room, brandishing and whirling his staff about in a manner to cause even rheumatism to flee the place, while, at the top of his voice he cried out:

"Martha Moulton, how *dare* you *feed* these—these—monsters—in human form!"

"Don't mind him, gentlemen, *please* don't," she made haste to say, "he's old, *very* old; eighty-five, his last birthday, and—a little hoity-toity at times," pointing deftly with her finger in the region of the reasoning powers in her own shapely head.

Summoning Major Pitcairn by an offer of a dish of beans, she contrived to say, under covert of it:

"You see, sir, I couldn't go away and leave him; he is almost distracted with rheumatism, and this excitement to-day will kill him, I'm afraid."

Advancing toward the staircase with bold and soldierly front, Major Pitcairn said to Uncle John:

"Stand aside, old man, and we'll hold you harmless."

"I don't believe you will, you red-trimmed trooper, you,"

was the reply; and, with a dexterous swing of the wooden staff, he mowed off and down three military hats.

Before any one had time to speak, Martha Moulton adroitly stooping, as though to recover Major Pitcairn's hat, which had rolled to her feet, swung the stairway-door into its place with a resounding bang, and followed up that achievement with a swift turn of two large wooden buttons, one high up, and the other low down, near the floor.

"There!" she said, "he is safe out of mischief for awhile, and your heads are safe as well. Pardon a poor old man, who does not know what he is about."

"He seems to know remarkably well," exclaimed an officer.

Meanwhile, behind the strong door, Uncle John's wrath knew no bounds. In his frantic endeavors to burst the fastenings of the wooden buttons, rheumatic cramps siezed him and carried the day, leaving him out of the battle.

Meanwhile, a portion of the soldiery clustered about the door. The king's horses were fed within five feet of the great brass knocker, while, within the house, the beautiful little old woman,in her Sunday-best-raiment, tried to do the dismal honors of the day to the foes of her country. Watching her, one would have thought she was entertaining heroes returned from the achievement of valiant deeds, whereas, in her own heart, she knew full well that she was giving a little to save much.

Nothing could exceed the seeming alacrity with which she fetched water from the well for the officers: and, when Major Pitcairn gallantly ordered his men to do the service, the little soul was in alarm; she was so afraid that "somehow, in some way or another, the blue stocking would get hitched on to the bucket." She knew that she must to its rescue, and so she bravely acknowledged herself to have taken a vow (when, she did not say), to draw all the water that was taken from that well.

"A remnant of witchcraft!" remarked a soldier within hearing.

"Do I look like a witch?" she demanded.

"If you do," replied Major Pitcairn, "I admire New England witches, and never would condemn one to be hung, or burned, or—smothered."

Martha Moulton never wore so brilliant a color on her aged cheeks as at that moment. She felt bitter shame at the ruse she had attempted, but silver spoons were precious, and, to escape the smile that went around at Major Pitcairn's words, she was only too glad to go again to the well and dip slowly the high, over-hanging sweep into the cool, clear, dark depth below.

During this time the cold, frosty morning spent itself into the brilliant, shining noon.

You know what happened at Concord on that 19th of April in the year 1775. You have been told the story, how the men of Acton met and resisted the king's troops at the old North Bridge, how brave Captain Davis and minute-man Hosmer fell, how the sound of their falling struck down to the very heart of mother earth, and caused her to send forth her brave sons to cry "Liberty, or Death!"

And the rest of the story; the sixty or more barrels of flour that the king's troops found and struck the heads from, leaving the flour in condition to be gathered again at nightfall, the arms and powder that they destroyed, the houses they burned; all these, are they not recorded in every child's history in the land?

While these things were going on, for a brief while, at midday, Martha Moulton found her home deserted. She had not forgotten poor, suffering, irate Uncle John in the regions above, and, so, the very minute she had the chance, she made a strong cup of catnip tea (the real tea, you know, was brewing in Boston harbor).

She turned the buttons, and, with a bit of trembling at her heart, such as she had not felt all day, she ventured up the stairs, bearing the steaming peace-offering before her.

Uncle John was writhing under the sharp thorns and twinges of his old enemy, and in no frame of mind to receive any overtures in the shape of catnip tea; nevertheless, he was watching, as well as he was able, the motions of the enemy. As she drew near he cried out:

"Look out this window, and see! Much *good* all your scheming will do *you!*"

She obeyed his command to look, and the sight she then saw caused her to let fall the cup of catnip tea and rush down the stairs, wringing her hands as she went and crying out:

"Oh, dear! what shall I do? The house will burn and the box up garret. Everything's lost!"

Major Pitcairn, at that moment, was on the green in front of her door, giving orders.

Forgetting the dignified part she intended to play, forgetting everything but the supreme danger that was hovering in mid-air over her home—the old house wherein she had been born, and the only home she had ever known—she rushed out upon the green, amid the troops, and surrounded by cavalry, and made her way to Major Pitcairn.

"The town-house is on fire!" she cried, laying her hand upon the commander's arm.

He turned and looked at her. Major Pitcairn had recently learned that the task he had been set to do in the provincial towns that day was not an easy one; that, when hard pressed and trodden down, the despised rustics, in home-spun dress, could sting even English soldiers; and thus it happened that, when he felt the touch of Mother Moulton's plump little old fingers on his military sleeve, he was not in the pleasant humor that he had

been, when the same hand had ministered to his hunger in the early morning.

"Well, what of it? *Let it burn!* We won't hurt *you,* if you go in the house and stay there!"

She turned and glanced up at the court-house. Already flames were issuing from it. "Go in the house and let it burn, *indeed!*" thought she. "He knows *me,* don't he? Oh, sir! for the love of Heaven won't you stop it?" she said, entreatingly.

"Run in the house, good mother. That is a wise woman," he advised.

Down in her heart, and as the very outcome of lip and brain she wanted to say, "You needn't 'mother' me, you murderous rascal!" but, remembering everything that was at stake, she crushed her wrath and buttoned it in as closely as she had Uncle John behind the door in the morning, and again, with swift gentleness, laid her hand on his arm.

He turned and looked at her. Vexed at her persistence, and extremely annoyed at intelligence that had just reached him from the North Bridge, he said, imperiously, "Get away! or you'll be trodden down by the horses!"

"I *can't* go!" she cried, clasping his arm, and fairly clinging to it in her frenzy of excitement. "Oh stop the fire, quick, quick! or my house will burn!"

I have no time to put out your fires," he said, carelessly, shaking loose from her hold and turning to meet a messenger with news.

Poor little woman! What could she do? The wind was rising, and the fire grew. Flame was creeping out in a little blue curl in a new place, under the rafter's edge, *and nobody cared.* That was what increased the pressing misery of it all. It was so unlike a common country alarm, where everybody rushed up and down the streets, crying "Fire! fire! f-i-r-e!" and

went hurrying to and fro for pails of water to help put it out.

Until that moment the little woman did not know how utterly deserted she was.

In very despair, she ran to her house, seized two pails, filled them with greater haste than she had ever drawn water before, and, regardless of Uncle John's imprecations, carried them forth, one in either hand, the water dripping carelessly down the side breadths of her fair silk gown, her silvery curls tossed and tumbled in white confusion, her pleasant face aflame with eagerness, and her clear eyes suffused with tears.

Thus equipped with facts and feeling, she once more appeared to Major Pitcairn.

"Have you a mother in old England?" she cried. "If so, for her sake, stop this fire."

Her words touched his heart.

"And if I do—?" he answered.

"Then your johnny-cake on my hearth won't burn up," she said, with a quick little smile, adjusting her cap.

Major Pitcairn laughed, and two soldiers, at his command, seized the pails and made haste to the court-house, followed by many more.

For awhile the fire seemed victorious, but, by brave effort, it was finally overcome, and the court-house saved.

At a distance Joe Devins had noticed the smoke hovering like a little cloud, then sailing away still more like a cloud over the town; and he had made haste to the scene, arriving in time to venture on the roof, and do good service there.

After the fire was extinguished, he thought of Martha Moulton, and he could not help feeling a bit guilty at the consciousness that he had gone off and left her alone.

Going to the house he found her entertaining the king's troopers with the best food her humble store afforded.

She was so charmed with herself, and so utterly well pleased with the success of her pleading, that the little woman's nerves fairly quivered with jubilation; and best of all, the blue stocking was still safe in the well, for had she not watched with her own eyes every time the bucket was dipped to fetch up water for the fire, having, somehow, got rid of the vow she had taken regarding the drawing of the water.

As she saw the lad looking, with surprised countenance, into the room where the feast was going on, a fear crept up her own face and darted out from her eyes. It was, lest Joe Devins should spoil it all by ill-timed words.

She made haste to meet him, basket in hand.

"Here, Joe," she said, "fetch me some small wood, there's a good boy."

As she gave him the basket she was just in time to stop the rejoinder that was issuing from his lips.

In time to intercept his return she was at the wood-pile.

"Joe," she said, half-abashed before the truth that shone in the boy's eyes, "Joe," she repeated, "you know Major Pitcairn ordered the fire put out, *to please me,* because I begged him so, and, in return, what *can* I do but give them something to eat. Come and help me."

"I won't," responded Joe. "Their hands are red with blood. They've killed two men at the bridge."

"Who's killed?" she asked, trembling, but Joe would not tell her. He demanded to know what had been done with Uncle John.

"He's quiet enough, up-stairs," she replied, with a sudden spasm of feeling that she *had* neglected Uncle John shamefully; still, with the day, and the fire and everything, how could she help it? but, really, it did seem strange that he made no noise, with a hundred armed men coming and going through the house.

At least, that was what Joe thought, and, having deposited the basket of wood on the threshold of the kitchen door, he departed around the corner of the house. Presently he had climbed a pear-tree, dropped from one of its overhanging branches on the lean-to, raised a sash and crept into the window.

Slipping off his shoes, heavy with spring-mud, he proceeded to search for Uncle John. He was not in his own room; he was not in the guest-chamber; he was not in any one of the rooms.

On the floor, by the window in the hall, looking out upon the green, he found the broken cup and saucer that Martha Moulton had let fall. Having made a second round, in which he investigated every closet and penetrated into the spaces under beds, Joe thought of the garret.

Tramp, tramp went the heavy feet on the sanded floors below, drowning every possible sound from above; nevertheless, as the lad opened the door leading into the garret, he whispered cautiously: "Uncle John! Uncle John!"

All was silent above. Joe went up, and was startled by a groan. He had to stand a few seconds, to let the darkness grow into light, ere he could see; and, when he could discern outlines in the dimness, there was given to him the picture of Uncle John, lying helpless amid and upon the nubbins that had been piled over his strong box.

"Why, Uncle John, are you dead?" asked Joe, climbing over to his side.

"Is the house afire?" was the response.

"House afire? No! The confounded red-coats up and put it out."

"I thought they was going to let me burn to death up here!" groaned Uncle John.

"Can I help you up?" and Joe proffered two strong hands, rather black with toil and smoke.

"No, no! You can't help me. If the house isn't afire, I'll stand it till the fellows are gone, and then, Joe you fetch the doctor as quick as you can."

"*You* can't get a doctor for love nor money this night, Uncle John. There's too much work to be done in Lexington and Concord to-night for wounded and dying men; and there'll be more of 'em too afore a single red-coat sees Boston again. They'll be hunted down every step of the way. They've killed Captain Davis, from Acton."

"You don't say so!"

"Yes, they have, and—"

"I say, Joe Devins, go down and do—do something. There's *my niece,* a-feeding the murderers! I'll disown her. She shan't have a penny of my pounds, she shan't!"

Both Joe and Uncle John were compelled to remain in inaction, while below, the weary little woman acted the kind hostess to His Majesty's troops.

But now the feast was spent, and the soldiers were summoned to begin their painful march. Assembled on the green, all was ready, when Major Pitcairn, remembering the little woman who had ministered to his wants, returned to the house to say farewell.

'Twas but a step to her door, and but a moment since he had left it, but he found her crying; crying with joy, in the very chair where he had found her at prayers in the morning.

"I would like to say good-by," he said; "you've been very kind to me to-day."

With a quick dash or two of the dotted white apron (spotless no longer) to her eye, she arose. Major Pitcairn extended his hand, but she folded her own closely together, and said:

"I wish you a pleasant journey back to Boston, sir."

"Will you not shake hands with me before I go?"

"I can feed the enemy of my country, but shake hands with him, *never!*"

For the first time that day, the little woman's love of country seemed to rise triumphant within her, and drown every impulse to selfishness; or was it the nearness to safety that she felt? Human conduct is the result of so many motives that it is sometimes impossible to name the compound, although on that occasion Martha Moulton labelled it "Patriotism."

"And yet I put out the fire for you," he said.

"For your mother's sake, in old England, it was, you remember, sir."

"I remember," said Major Pitcairn, with a sigh, as he turned away.

"And for *her* sake I will shake hands with you," said Martha Moulton.

So he turned back, and across the threshold, in presence of the waiting troops, the commander of the expedition to Concord, and the only woman in the town, shook hands at parting.

Martha Moulton saw Major Pitcairn mount his horse; heard the order given for the march to begin,—the march of which you all have heard. You know what a sorry time the Redcoats had of it in getting back to Boston; how they were fought at every inch of the way, and waylaid from behind every convenient tree-trunk, and shot at from tree-tops, and aimed at from upper windows, and beseiged from behind stone walls, and, in short, made so miserable and harassed and overworn, that at last their depleted ranks, with the tongues of the men parched and hanging, were fain to lie down by the road-side and take what came next, even though it might be death. And then *the dead* they left behind them!

Ah! there's nothing wholesome to mind or body about war, until long, long after it is over, and the earth has had time to

hide the blood, and send it forth in sweet blooms of liberty, with forget-me-nots springing thick between.

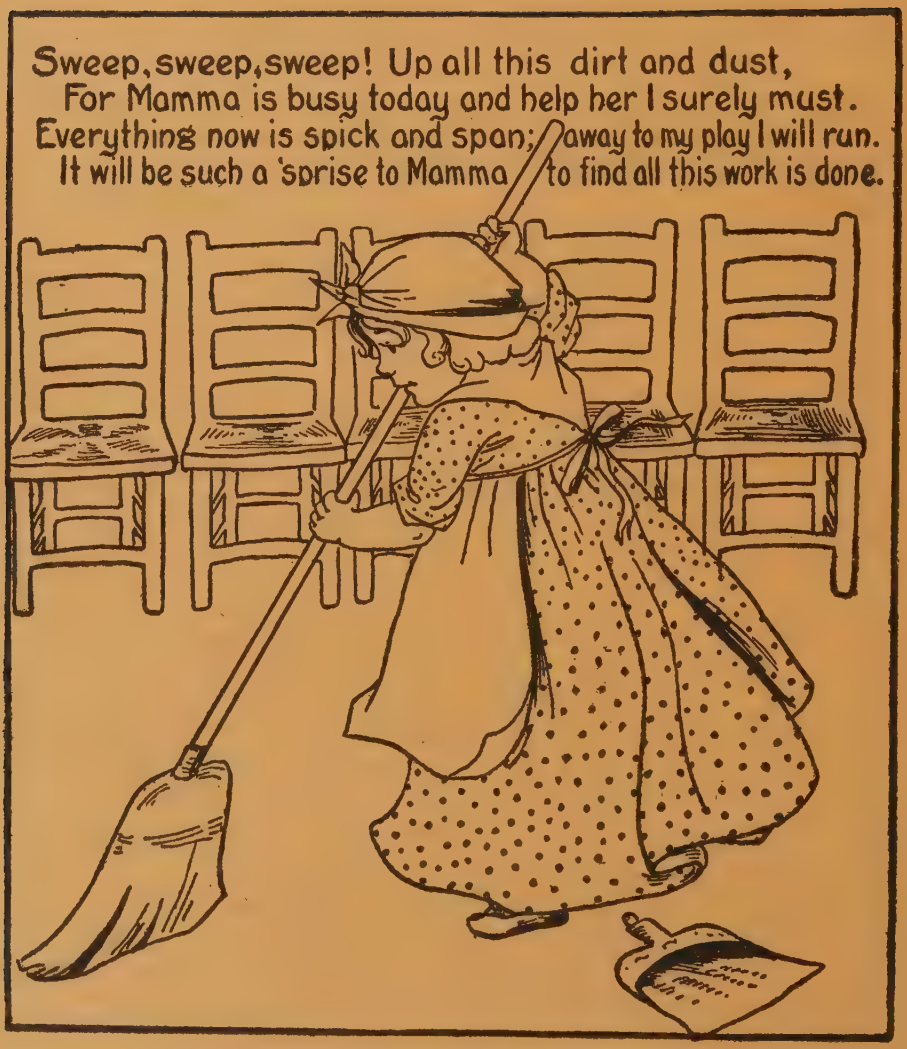
The men of that day are long dead. The same soil holds regulars and minute-men. England, who over-ruled, and the provinces, that put out brave hands to seize their rights, are good friends to-day, and have shaken hands over many a threshold of hearty thought and kind deeds since that time.

The tree of Liberty grows yet, stately and fair, for the men of the Revolution planted it well and surely. God himself *hath* given it increase. So we gather to-day, in this our story, a forget-me-not more, from the old town of Concord.

When the troops had marched away, the weary little woman laid aside her silken gown, resumed her homespun dress, and immediately began to think of getting Uncle John down-stairs again into his easy chair; but it required more aid than she could give to lift the fallen man. At last Joe Devins summoned returning neighbors, who came to the rescue, and the poor nubbins were left to the rats once more.

Joe climbed down the well and rescued the blue stocking, with its treasures unharmed, even to the precious watch, which watch was Martha Moulton's chief treasure, and one of very few in the town.

Martha Moulton was the heroine of the day. The house was beseiged by admiring men and women that night and for two or three days thereafter; but when, years later, she being older, and poorer, even to want, petitioned the General Court for a reward for the service she rendered in persuading Major Pitcairn to save the court-house from burning, there was granted to her only fifteen dollars, a poor little forget-me-not, it is true, but *just enough* to carry her story down the years, whereas, but for that, it might never have been wafted up and down the land,


Sweep, sweep, sweep! Up all this dirt and dust,
For Mamma is busy today and help her I surely must.
Everything now is spick and span; away to my play I will run.
It will be such a 'sprise to Mamma to find all this work is done.

THE CONQUEST OF FAIRYLAND.

THERE reigned a king in the land of Persia, mighty and great was he grown,
On the necks of the kings of the conquered earth he builded up his throne.

There sate a king on the throne of Persia; and he was grown so proud
That all the life of the world was less to him than a passing cloud.

He reigned in glory: joy and sorrow lying between his hands.
If he sighed a nation shook, his smile ripened the harvest of lands.

He was the saddest man beneath the everlasting sky,
For all his glories had left him old, and the proudest king must die.

He who was even as God to all the nations of men,
Must die as the merest peasant dies, and turn into earth again.

And his life with the fear of death was bitter and sick and accursed,
As brackish water to drink of which is to be forever athirst.

The hateful years rolled on and on, but once it chanced at noon
The drowsy court was thrilled to gladness, it echoed so sweet a tune.

Low as the lapping of the sea, as the song of the lark is clear,
Wild as the moaning of pine branches; the king was fain to hear.

"What is the song, and who is the singer?" he said; "before the throne
Let him come, for the songs of the world are mine, and all but this are known."

THE EYES OF THE SINGER SHONE AS HE SANG.

Seven mighty kings went out the minstrel man to find:
And all they found was a dead cyprus soughing in the wind.

And slower still, and sadder still the heavy winters rolled,
And the burning summers waned away, and the king grew very old;

Dull, worn, feeble, bent; and once he thought, "to die
Were rest, at least." And as he thought the music wandered by.

Into the presence of the king, singing, the singer came,
And his face was like the spring in flower, his eyes were clear as flame.

"What is the song you play, and what the theme your praises sing?
It is sweet; I knew not I owned a thing so sweet," said the weary king.

"I sing my country," said the singer, "a land that is sweeter than song."
"Which of my kingdoms is your country? Thither would I along."

"Great, O king, is thy power, and the earth a footstool for thy feet;
But my country is free, and my own country, and oh, my country is sweet!"

As he heard the eyes of the king grew young and alive with fire:
"Lo, is there left on the earth a thing to strive for, a thing to desire?

"Where is thy country? tell me, O singer, speak thine innermost heart!
Leave thy music! speak plainly! Speak – forget thine art!"

The eyes of the singer shone as he sang, and his voice rang wild and free
As the elemental wind or the uncontrollable sobs of the sea.

"O my distant home!" he sighed; "Oh, alas! away and afar
I watch thee now as a lost sailor watches a shining star.

"Oh, that a wind would take me there! that a bird would set me down
Where the golden streets shine red at sunset in my father's town!

"For only in dreams I see the faces of the women there,
And fain would I hear them singing once, braiding their ropes of hair.

"Oh, I am thirsty, and long to drink of the river of Life, and I
Am fain to find my own country, where no man shall die."

Out of the light of the throne the king looked down: as in the spring
The green leaves burst from their dusky buds, so was hope in the eyes of the king.

"Lo," he said, "I will make thee great; I will make thee mighty in sway
Even as I; but the name of thy country speak, and the place and the way."

"Oh, the way to my country is ever north till you pass the mouth of hell,
Past the limbo of dreams and the desolate land where shadows dwell.

"And when you have reached the fount of wonder, you ford the waters wan
To the land of elves and the land of fairies, enchanted Masinderan."

The singer ceased; and the lyre in his hand snapped, as a cord, in twain;
And neither lyre nor singer was seen in the kingdom of Persia again.

And all the nobles gazed astounded; no man spoke a word
Till the old king said: "Call out my armies; bring me hither a sword!"

As a little torrent swollen by snows is turned to a terrible stream,
So the gathering voices of all his countries cried to the king in his dream.

Crying, "For thee, O our king, for thee we had freely and willingly died,
Warriors, martyrs, what thou wilt; not that our lives betide

MARCHING DOWN TO FAIRYLAND.

"The worth of a thought to the king, but rather because thy rod
Is over our heads as over thine is the changeless will of God.

"Rather for this we beseech thee, O master, for thine own sake refrain
From the blasphemous madness of pride, from the fever of impious gain."

"You seek my death," the king thundered; "you cry, forbear to save
The life of a king too old to frolic; let him sleep in the grave.

"But I will live for all your treason; and, by my own right hand!
I will set out this day with you to conquer Fairyland."

Then all the nations paled aghast, for the battle to begin
Was a war with God, and a war with death, and they knew the thing was sin.

Sick at heart they gathered together, but none denounced the wrong,
For the will of God was unseen, unsaid, and the will of the king was strong.

So the air grew bright with spears, and the earth shook under the tread
Of the mighty horses harnessed for battle; the standards flaunted red.

And the wind was loud with the blare of trumpets, and every house was void
Of the strength and stay of the house, and the peace of the land destroyed.

And the growing corn was trodden under the weight of armed feet,
And every woman in Persia cursed the sound of a song too sweet,

Cursed the insensate longing for life in the heart of a sick old man;
But the king of Persia with all his armies marched on Masinderan.

Many a day they marched in the sun till their silver armour was lead
To sink their bodies into the grave, and many a man fell dead.

And they passed the mouth of hell, and the shadowy country gray,
Where the air is mist and the people mist and the rain more real than they.

And they came to the fount of wonder, and forded the waters wan,
And the king of Persia and all his armies marched on Masinderan.

And they turned the rivers to blood, and the fields to a ravaged camp,
And they neared the golden faery town, that burned in the dusk as a lamp.

And they stood and shouted for joy to see it stand so nigh,
Given into their hands for spoil; and their hearts beat proud and high.

And the armies longed for the morrow, to conquer the shining town,
For there was no death in the land, neither any to strike them down.

The hosts were many in numbers, mighty, and skilled in the strife,
And they lusted for gold and conquest as the old king lusted for life.

And, gazing on the golden place, night took them unaware,
And black and windy grew the skies, and black the eddying air—

So long the night and black the night that fell upon their eyes,
They quaked with fear, those mighty hosts; the sun would never rise.

Darkness and deafening sounds confused the black, tempestuous air,
And no man saw his neighbor's face, nor heard his neighbor's prayer.

And wild with terror the raging armies fell on each other in fight,
The ground was strewn with wounded men, mad in the horrible night—

Mad with eternal pain, with darkness and stabbing blows
Rained on all sides from invisible hands till the ground was red as a rose.

And, though he was longing for rest, none ventured to pause from the strife,
Lest haply another wound be his to poison his hateful life

And the king entreated death; and for peace the armies prayed;
But the gifts of God are everlasting, his word is not gainsaid.

Gold and battle are given the hosts, their boon is turned to a ban,
And the curse of the king is to reign forever in conquered Masinderan.

A. MARY F. ROBINSON.

Handy Spandy, Jack-a-Dandy,
Loved plum cake and sugar candy;
He bought some at a grocers shop
And out he came with a hop,
hop,
hop.

Jocko is a monkey,
Dressed just like a clown;
With the grinding-organ man
He travels round the town.

Jocko, Jocko, climb a pole,
Jocko climb a tree,
Jocko, Jocko, tip your cap,
And make a bow to me.

KENTUCKY BELLE.

SUMMER of 'sixty-three, sir, and Conrad was gone away—
Gone to the county-town, sir, to sell our first load of hay—
We lived in the log-house yonder, poor as ever you've seen;
Röschen there was a baby, and I was only nineteen.

Conrad, he took the oxen, but he left Kentucky Belle;
How much we thought of Kentucky, I couldn't begin to tell—
Came from the Blue-Grass country; my father gave her to me
When I rode north with Conrad, away from Tennessee.

Conrad lived in Ohio—a German he is, you know—
The house stood in broad corn-fields, stretching on, row after row;
The old folks made me welcome; they were kind as kind could be
But I kept longing, longing, for the hills of Tennessee.

O, for a sight of water, the shadowed slope of a hill!
Clouds that hang on the summit, a wind that is never still!
But the level land went stretching away to meet the sky —
Never a rise, from north to south, to rest the weary eye!

From east to west, no river to shine out under the moon,
Nothing to make a shadow in the yellow afternoon;
Only the breathless sunshine, as I looked out, all forlorn;
Only the "rustle, rustle," as I walked among the corn.

When I fell sick with pining, we didn't wait any more,
But moved away from the corn-lands out to this river shore—
The Tuscarawas it's called, sir—off there's a hill, you see—
And now I've grown to like it next best to the Tennessee.

I was at work that morning. Some one came riding like mad
Over the bridge and up the road—Farmer Rouf's little lad;
Bareback he rode; he had no hat; he hardly stopped to say;
"Morgan's men are coming, Frau; they're galloping on this way;

"I'm sent to warn the neighbors. He isn't a mile behind;
He sweeps up all the horses—every horse that he can find;
Morgan, Morgan, the raider, and Morgan's terrible men,
With bowie-knives and pistols, are galloping up the glen."

The lad rode down the valley, and I stood still at the door;
The baby laughed and prattled, playing with spools on the floor;
Kentuck was out in the pasture; Conrad, my man, was gone;
Nearer, nearer, Morgan's men were galloping, galloping on!

Sudden I picked up the baby, and ran to the pasture-bar;
"Kentuck!" I called; "Kentucky!" She knew me ever so far!
I led her down the gully that turns off there to the right,
And tied her to the bushes; her head was just out of sight.

As I ran back to the log-house, at once there came a sound—
The ring of hoofs, galloping hoofs, trembling over the ground—
Coming into the turnpike out from the White Woman Glen—
Morgan, Morgan the raider, and Morgan's terrible men.

As near they drew and nearer, my heart beat fast in alarm!
But still I stood in the doorway, with baby on my arm.
They came; they passed; with spur and whip in haste they sped along—
Morgan, Morgan the raider, and his band six hundred strong.

Weary they looked and jaded, riding through night and through
day;
Pushing on east to the river, many long miles away,
To the border-strip where Virginia runs up into the West,
To ford the Upper Ohio before they could stop to rest.

On like the wind they hurried, and Morgan rode in advance;
Bright were his eyes like live coals, as he gave me a sideways
glance;
And I was just breathing freely, after my choking pain,
When the last one of the troopers suddenly drew his rein.

Frightened I was to death, sir; I scarce dared look in his face,
As he asked for a drink of water, and glanced around the place:
I gave him a cup, and he smiled—'twas only a boy, you see;
Faint and worn; with dim blue eyes, and he'd sailed on the
Tennessee.

Only sixteen he was, sir—a fond mother's only son—
Off and away with Morgan before his life had begun!
The damp drops stood on his temples; drawn was the boyish
mouth;
And I thought me of the mother waiting down in the South!

O, pluck was he to the backbone; and clear grit through and
through;
Boasted and bragged like a trooper; but the big words
wouldn't do;
The boy was dying sir, dying, as plain as plain could be,
Worn out by his ride with Morgan up from the Tennessee.

But, when I told the laddie that I too was from the South,
Water came into his dim eyes, and quivers around his mouth;

"Do you know the Blue-Grass country?" he wistfully began to say;
Then swayed like a willow sapling, and fainted dead away.

I had him into the log-house, and worked and brought him to;
I fed him, and I coaxed him, as I thought his mother'd do;
And, when the lad got better, and the noise in his head was gone,
Morgan's men were miles away, galloping, galloping on.

"O, I must go," he muttered; "I must be up and away!
Morgan, Morgan is waiting for me! O, what will Morgan say?"
But I heard the sound of tramping, and kept him back from the door—
The ringing sound of horses' hoofs that I had heard before.

And on, on came the soldiers—the Michigan cavalry—
And fast they rode, and back they looked, galloping rapidly;
They had followed hard on Morgan's track; they had followed day and night;
But of Morgan and Morgan's raiders they had never caught a sight.

And rich Ohio sat startled through all these summer days;
For strange, wild men were galloping over her broad highways;
Now here, now there, now seen, now gone, now north, now east, now west,
Through river-valleys and corn-land farms, sweeping away her best.

A bold ride and a long ride! But they were taken at last;
They had almost reached the river by galloping hard and fast;
But the boys in blue were upon them ere ever they gained the ford,
And Morgan, Morgan the raider, laid down his terrible sword.

Well, I kept the boy till evening—kept him against his will—
But he was too weak to follow, and sat there pale and still;
When it was cool and dusky—you'll wonder to hear me tell—
But I stole down to the gully, and brought up Kentucky Belle.

I kissed the star on her forehead—my pretty, gentle lass —
But I knew that she'd be happy, back in the old Blue-Grass:
A suit of clothes of Conrad's, with all the money I had,
And Kentucky, pretty Kentucky, I gave to the worn-out lad.

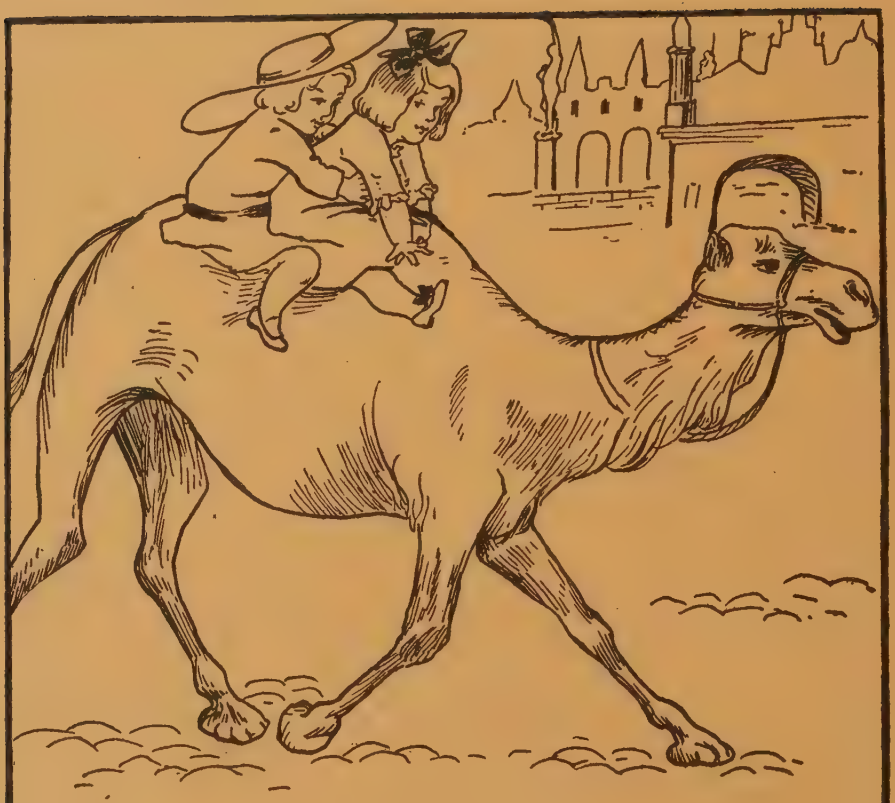
I guided him to the southward, as well as I knew how:
The boy rode off with many thanks, and many a backward bow;
And then the glow it faded, and my heart began to swell;
And down the glen away she went, my lost Kentucky Belle!

When Conrad came in the evening, the moon was shining high,
Baby and I were both crying—I couldn't tell him why—
But a battered suit of rebel gray was hanging on the wall,
And a thin old horse with drooping head stood in Kentucky's stall.

Well, he was kind, and never once said a hard word to me,
He knew I couldn't help it—'twas all for the Tennessee;
But, after the war was over, just think what came to pass—
A letter, sir, and the two were safe back in the old Blue-Grass.

The lad got across the border, riding Kentucky Belle;
And Kentuck she was thriving, and fat, and hearty, and well;
He cared for her, and kept her, nor touched her with whip or spur;
Ah! we've had many horses, but never a horse like her!

CONSTANCE FENIMORE WOOLSON.



Moses was a camel that traveled o'er the sand,
Of the desert, fiercely hot, way down in Egypt-land;
But they brought him to the Fair,
Now upon his hump,
Every child can take a ride,
Who can stand the bumpity-bump.

PROPHECIES.

LITTLE blue egg, in the nest snug and warm,
Covered so close from the wind and the storm,
Guarded so carefully day after day,
What is your use in this world now, pray?
"Bend your head closer; my secret I'll tell:
There's a baby-bird hid in my tiny blue shell."

Little green bud, all covered with dew,
Answer my question and answer it true;
What were you made for, and why do you stay
Clinging so close to the twig all the day?
"Hid in my green sheath, some day to unclose,
Nestles the warm, glowing heart of a rose."

Dear, little baby-girl, dainty and fair,
Sweetest of flowers, of jewels most rare,
Surely there's no other use for you here
Than just to be petted and played with, you dear!
"Oh, a wonderful secret I'm coming to know,
Just a baby like me, to a woman shall grow."

Ah, swiftly the bird from the nest flies away,
And the bud to a blossom unfolds day by day,
While the woman looks forth in my baby-girl's eyes,
Through her joys and her sorrows, her tears and surprise—
Too soon shall the years bring this gift to her cup,
God keep her, my woman who's now growing up!

BY KATHRINE LENTE STEVENSON.

Who said that I was a naughty dog,
And could not behave if I tried?
I only chewed up Katrina's French doll,
And shook her rag one until it cried.

WHY HE WAS WHIPPED.

HE was seven years old, lived in Cheyenne, and his name was Tommy. Moreover he was going to school for the first time in his life. Out here little people are not allowed to attend school when they are five or six, for the Law says: "Children under seven must not go to school."

But now Tommy was seven and had been to school two weeks, and such delightful weeks! Every day mamma listened to long accounts of how "me and Dick Ray played marbles," and "us fellers cracked the whip." There was another thing that he used to tell mamma about, something that in those first days he always spoke of in the most subdued tones, and that—I am sorry to record it of any school, much more a Cheyenne school—was the numerous whippings that were administered to various little boys and girls. There was something painfully fascinating about those whippings to restless, mischievous little Tommy who had never learned the art of sitting still. He knew his turn might come at any moment and one night he cried out in his sleep: "Oh, dear, what will become of me if I get whipped!" But as the days passed on and this possible retribution overtook him not, his fears gradually forsook him, and instead of speaking pitifully of "those poor little children who were whipped," he mentioned them in a causal off-hand manner as, "those cry-babies, you know?" One afternoon mamma saw him sitting on the porch, slapping his little fat hand with a strap. "Tommy, child, what in the world are you doing?" she asked.

Into his pocket he thrust the strap, and the pink cheeks grew pinker still as their owner answered:

"I—I—was just seeing—how hard I could hit my hand—without crying;" and he disappeared around the side of the house before mamma could ask any more questions.

The next day Tommy's seatmate, Dicky Ray, was naughty in school, and Miss Linnet called him up, opened her desk, took out a little riding whip—it was a bright blue one—and then and there administered punishment. And because he cried, when recess came, Tommy said: "Isn't Dick Ray just a reg'lar girl cry-baby?" (He had learned that word from some of the big boys, but, mind you! he never dared to say it before his mother.)

Dick's face flushed with anger. "Never you mind, Tommy Brown," said he, "Just wait till you get whipped and we'll see a truly girl-cry-baby then, won't we, Daisy?"

And blue-eyed Daisy, who was the idol of their hearts, nodded her curly little head in the most emphatic manner, and said she "wouldn't be one bit s'prised if he'd holler so loud that they would hear him way down in Colorado."

Tommy stood aghast! for, really and truly, he wasn't quite so stony-hearted a little mortal as he appeared to be; he had been secretly rather sorry for Dick, but—he wanted Daisy to think that he himself was big and manly, and he had the opinion that this was just the way to win her admiration. But all this time *he didn't know what Daisy did*—that Dick's pockets were full of sugar-plums; tiptop ones too, for Daisy had tasted them, and knew that little packets of them would from time to time find their way into her chubby hand.

All the rest of the morning Tommy kept thinking, thinking, thinking. One thing was certain: the present situation was not to be endured one moment longer than was absolutely necessary. But what could he do? Should he fight Dicky? This plan was rejected at once, on high, moral grounds. Well, then,

supposing some dark night he should see Daisy on the street, just grab her, hold on tight and say: "Now, Daisy Rivers, I won't let you go till you promise you'll like me a great deal betterer than you do Dick Ray." There seemed something nice about this plan, very nice; the more Tommy thought of it, the better he liked it; only there were two objections to it. Firstly: Daisy never by any chance ventured out doors after dark. Secondly: Neither did Tom.

Both objections being insurmountable, this delightful scheme was reluctantly abandoned, and the thinking process went on harder than ever, till at last—oh, oh! if he only dared! What a triumph it would be! But then he couldn't—yes, he could too. Didn't she say that she "wouldn't be one bit s'prised if he hollered so loud that they would hear him way down in Colorado?" Colorado, indeed! He'd show her there was one boy in the school who wasn't a girl-cry-baby!

Yes, actually, foolish Tommy had decided to prove his manhood by being whipped, and that that interesting little event should take place that very afternoon!

What did he do? He whispered six times!

Had it been any other child, he would surely have been punished; but Miss Linnet knew both Tommy and his mamma quite well, and therefore she knew also, quite well, that only a few days ago the one horror of Tommy's life had been the thought that he might possibly be whipped. Then too, it was his first term at school, and hitherto he had been very good. So she decided to keep him after school and talk to him of the sinfulness of bad conduct in general, and of whispering in particular. This plan she faithfully carried out, and the little culprit's heart so melted within him that he climbed up on his teacher's lap, put his arms around her neck and kissed her, crying

he would never be so naughty again. He was just going to tell her all about Daisy, when in walked a friend of Miss Linnet's, so he went home instead. The next morning he started for school with the firm determination to be a good child, and I really believe he would have been had not that provoking little witch of a Daisy marched past him in a very independent manner, her saucy nose away up in the air, and a scornful look in the pretty blue eyes. It was more than flesh and blood could stand. All Tom's good resolutions flew sky-high.

SHE MADE THEM CLASP HANDS.

When twelve o'clock came Miss Linnet's list of delinquents begun in this wise:

WHISPER MARKS.

Thomas Brown	15
Melinda Jones	11

There was great excitement among the little people. How dared any one be so dreadfully bad! Tommy's heart sank, sank, sank, when Miss Linnet said: "When school begins this afternoon I shall punish Tommy and Melinda."

And she did! She called them both up on the platform, made them clasp hands and stand with their backs against the blackboard, then wrote just above their heads:

Thomas Brown
and
Melinda Jones
} Partners in disgrace.
15 plus 11 = 26.

Oh, how mortified and ashamed Tommy was! If only she had whipped him, or if it had been some other girl. But *Melinda Jones!!!* At the end of ten minutes Miss Linnet let them take their seats; but Tommy's heart burned within him. *Daisy had laughed when he stood there holding Melinda's hand!* There were deep crimson spots on Tommy's cheeks all that afternoon and a resolute, determined look in his bright brown eyes, but he was very still and quiet.

Later in the day the children were startled by a sudden commotion on the other side of the room. Daisy was writing on her slate and Melinda Jones, in passing to her seat, accidentally knocked it out of her hands; without a moment's hesitation, Daisy, by way of expressing her feelings, snatched her slate and promptly administered such a sounding "whack!" on Melinda's back and shoulders as brought a shriek of anguish from that poor, little unfortunate who began to think that if all the days of her life were to be like unto this day, existence would certainly prove a burden.

Just about two minutes later Miss Linnet was standing by her desk, a ruler in one hand and Daisy's open palm in the other, while Daisy herself, miserable little culprit, stood white and

trembling before her. As she raised the ruler to give the first blow, Tommy sprang forward, placing himself at Daisy's side, put his open palm over hers, and with tears in his eyes, pleaded in this wise:

"Please, Miss Linnet, whip me instead! She is only just a little girl and I *know* she'll cry, it will hurt her so! I'd rather

"PLEASE, MISS LINNET, WHIP ME INSTEAD!"

it would be me every time than Daisy—truly I won't cry. Oh, please whip me!"

And Miss Linnet did whip him, while Daisy, filled with

remorse, clung to him sobbing as if her heart would break. To be sure, somebody who ought to know, told me it was the lightest "feruling" ever child received; but Daisy and Tommy both assured their mothers that it was the "dreadfulest, cruelest, hardest whipping ever was."

"And did my little man cry?" asked mamma.

"No, indeed! I stood up big as I could, looked at Daisy and smiled, 'cause I was so glad it wasn't her."

Then that proud and happy mamma took him in her arms and kissed him; and right in the midst of the kissing in walked Daisy.

"Would Tommy please come and take supper with her?"

Of course he would, and they walked off hand in hand. When they passed Dicky's house Tommy suggested: "S'posing they forgive Dick and let him go 'long too." And Daisy agreeing, they called that young gentleman out and magnanimously informed him that he was forgiven and might come and have supper with them.

What in the world they had to forgive, nobody knows; but then, so long as forgiveness proved such an eminently satisfactory arrangement, all round—why, nobody need care.

The children waited outside the gate while Dick coaxed his mother to let him go, and standing there, hand in hand, Daisy plucked up heart of grace and with very rosy cheeks and an air about her of general penitence, said something very sweet in a very small voice:

"I'm sorry you were whipped, and oh, Tommy, I wish I hadn't said you'd holler!"

MRS. AMY TERESE POWELSON.

Baby thinks it fine,
In the summer-time,
To wade in the brook clear and bright.
But a big green frog
Jumped off of a log,
And gave
Baby Charlotte
quite a fright.

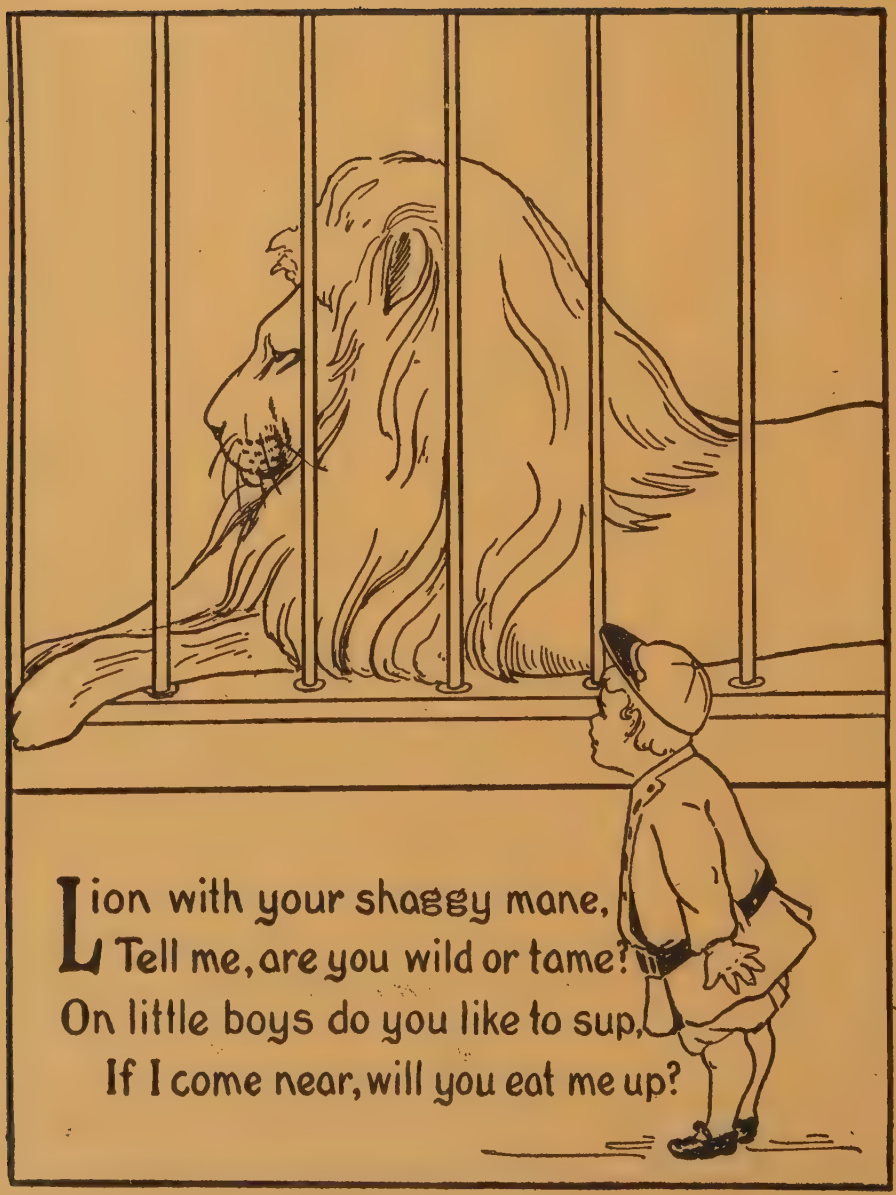
THE THREE FISHERS.

THREE fishers went sailing away to the West—
Away to the West as the sun went down;
Each thought on the woman who loved him best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town;
For men must work, and women must weep,
And there's little to earn and many to keep,
Though the harbor-bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the light-house tower
And trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;
They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,
And the night-wrack came rolling up, ragged and brown.
But men must work and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden and waters deep,
And the harbor-bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands,
For those who will never come back to the town;
For men must work, and women must weep—
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep—
And good-by to the bar and its moaning.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.



Lion with your shaggy mane,
Tell me, are you wild or tame?
On little boys do you like to sup,
If I come near, will you eat me up?

"APPLES FINKEY"—THE WATER-BOY.

"APPLES FINKEY!" Many a name
Has a grander sound in the roll of fame;

Many a more resplendent deed
Has burst to light in the hour of need;

But never a one from a truer heart,
Striving to know and to do its part.

Striving, under his skin of tan,
With the years of a lad to act like a man.

And who was "Apples?" I hear you ask.
To trace his descent were indeed a task.

Winding and vague was the family road—
And, perhaps, like Topsy, "he only growed."

But into the camp he lolled one noon,
Barefoot, and whistling a darky tune,

Into the camp of his dusky peers—
The gallant negro cavaliers—

The Tenth, preparing, at break o' day,
To move to the transport down in the bay.

Boom! roared the gun—the ship swung free,
With her good prow turned to the Carib Sea.

"Pity it was, for the little cuss,
We couldn't take 'Apples' along with us,"

The trooper said, as he walked the deck,
And Tampa became a vanishing speck.

What's that? A stir and a creak down there
In the piled-up freight—then a tuft of hair,

Crinkled and woolly and unshorn—
And out popped "Apples" "ez shore's yer born!"

Of course he wasn't provided for
In the colonel's roll or the rules of war;

But somehow or other the troop was glad
To welcome the little darky lad.

You know how our brave men, white and black,
Landed and followed the Spaniard's track;

And the Tenth was there in the very front,
Seeking and finding the battle's brunt.

Onward they moved through the living hell
Where the enemy's bullets like raindrops fell,

Down through the brush, and onward still
Till they came to the foot of San Juan hill—

Then up they went, with never a fear,
And the heights were won with a mad, wild cheer!

And where was "the mascot Finkey" then?
In the surging ranks of the fighting men!

Wherever a trooper was seen to fall,
In the open field or the chaparral;

"APPLES FINKEY"—THE WATER-BOY.

Wherever was found a wounded man;
"Apples" was there with his water and can.

About him the shrapnel burst in vain—
He was up and on with his work again.

The sharpshooters rattled a sharp tattoo,
The singing mausers around him flew.

But "Apples" was busy—too busy to care
For the instant death and the danger there.

Many a parched throat burning hot,
Many a victim of Spanish shot,

Was blessed that day, ere the fight was won
Under the tropical, deadly sun,

By the cool drops poured from the water-can
Of the dusky lad who was all a man.

In the forward trenches, at close of day,
Burning with fever, "Finkey" lay.

He seemed to think through the long, wet night,
He still was out in the raging fight,

For once he spoke in his troubled sleep;
"I'se comin', Cap., ef my legs'll keep!"

Next day—and the next—and the next—he stayed
In the trenches dug by the Spaniard's spade,

For the sick and wounded could not get back
Over the mountainous, muddy track.

But the troopers gave what they had to give
That the little mascot might stick and live.

Over him many a dark face bent,
And through it all he was well content—

Well content as a soldier should
Who had fought his fight and the foe withstood.

Slowly these stern beleaguered men
Nursed him back to his strength again,

Till one fair day his glad eyes saw
A sight that filled him with pride and awe,

For there, as he looked on the stronghold down,
The flag was hoisted over the town,

And none in that host felt a sweeter joy
Than "Apples Finkey," the water-boy.

—JOHN JEROME ROONEY, *in New York Sun.*

Down at the pond in zero weather,
To have a fine skate
the girls and boys gather.
Even the Baby thinks it a treat,
But somehow cannot stay upon his feet.

Tom, Tom, the piper's son,
Stole a pig and away he run!
The pig was eat,
And Tom was beat,
And Tom went roaring down the street.

THE SOLDIER'S REPRIEVE.

"I THOUGHT, Mr. Allen, when I gave my Bennie to his country, that not a father in all this broad land made so precious a gift—no, not one. The dear boy only slept a minute, just one little minute at his post; I know that was all, for Bennie never dozed over a duty. How prompt and reliable he was! I know he only fell asleep one little second—he was so young and not strong, that boy of mine. Why, he was as tall as I, and only eighteen! And now they shoot him because he was found asleep when doing sentinel duty. "Twenty-four hours,' the telegram said, only twenty-fours hours. Where is Bennie now?"

"We will hope with his heavenly Father," said Mr. Allen soothingly.

"Yes, yes; let us hope; God is very merciful! 'I should be ashamed, father,' Bennie said, 'when I am a man to think I never used this great right arm'—and he held it out proudly before me—'for my country when it needed it. Palsy it, rather than keep it at the plow.' 'Go, then, my boy, and God keep you!' I said. God has kept him, I think, Mr. Allen!" And the farmer repeated these last words slowly, as if in spite of his reason his heart doubted them.

"Like the apple of the eye, Mr. Owen; doubt it not."

Blossom sat near them listening with blanched cheek. She had not shed a tear. Her anxiety had been so concealed that no one had noticed it. She had occupied herself mechanically in the household cares. Now, she answered a gentle tap at the door, opening it to receive from a neighbor's hand a letter. "It is from him," was all she said.

It was like a message from the dead! Mr. Owen took the letter, but could not break the envelope on account of his trembling fingers, and held it toward Mr. Allen, with the helplessness of a child. The minister opened it and read as follows:

"Dear Father:—When this reaches you I shall be in eternity. At first it seemed awful to me, but I have thought so much about it that now it has no terror. They say they will not bind me, nor blind me, but that I may meet death like a man. I thought, father, that it might have been on the battle field, for my country, and that when I fell, it would be fighting gloriously; but to be shot down like a dog for nearly betraying it—to die for neglect of duty! O, father! I wonder the very thought does not kill me! But I shall not disgrace you; I am going to write you all about it, and when I am gone you may tell my comrades. I cannot, now.

"You know I promised Jemmie Carr's mother I would look after her boy; and when he fell sick I did all I could for him. He was not strong when he was ordered back into the ranks, and the day before that night, I carried all his luggage besides my own on our march. Towards night we went in on double quick, and though the luggage began to feel very heavy, everybody else was tired, too; and as for Jemmie, if I had not lent him an arm now and then he would have dropped by the way. I was all tired out when we came into camp, and then it was Jemmie's turn to be sentry. I would take his place; but I was too tired, father. I could not have kept awake if a gun had been pointed at my head; but I did not know it until—well, until it was too late."

"God be thanked" interrupted Mr. Owen, reverently, "I knew Bennie was not the boy to sleep carelessly at his post."

"They tell me to-day that I have a short reprieve, 'time to write to you,' the good Colonel says. Forgive him, Father, he

only does his duty; he would gladly save me if he could; and do not lay my death against Jemmie. The poor boy is heart-broken, and does nothing but beg and entreat them to let him die in my place.

"I can't bear to think of mother and Blossom. Comfort them, Father! Tell them I die as a brave boy should, and that, when the war is over, they will not be ashamed of me, as they must be now. God help me! It is very hard to bear! Good-bye, father, God seems near and dear to me; not at all as if he wished me to perish forever, but as if he felt sorry for his poor sinful, broken-hearted child, and would take me to be with him and my Savior in a better life."

A deep sigh burst from Mr. Owen's heart. "Amen," he said, solemnly, "amen."

"To-night, in the early twilight, I shall see the cows all coming home from the pasture, and precious little Blossom standing on the back stoop, waiting for me! But I shall never, never come! God bless you all! Forgive your poor Bennie!"

Late that night the door of the "back stoop" opened softly and a little figure glided out and down the footpath that led to the road by the mill. She seemed rather flying than walking, turning her head neither to the right nor left, looking only now and then to heaven, and folding her hands as if in prayer. Two hours later the same young girl stood at the mill depot, watching the coming of the night train; and the conductor, as he reached down to lift her into the car, wondered at the tear-stained face that was upturned toward the dim lantern he held in his hand. A few questions and ready answers told him all; and no father could have cared more tenderly for his only child than he for our little Blossom. She was on her way to Washington to ask President Lincoln for her brother's life. She had stolen away, leaving only a note to tell them where and why she had gone.

She had brought Bennie's letter with her; no good, kind heart like the President's could refuse to be melted by it. The next morning they reached New York, and the conductor hurried her on to Washington. Every minute, now, might be the means of saving her brother's life. And so, in an incredibly short time, Blossom reached the Capitol and hastened to the White House.

The president had just seated himself to his morning task of overlooking and signing important papers, when without one word of announcement the door softly opened, and Blossom, with down-cast eyes and folded hands, stood before him.

"Well, my child," he said in his pleasant, cheerful tones, "what do you want so bright and early this morning?"

"Bennie's life, sir," faltered Blossom.

"Who is Bennie?"

"My brother, sir. They are going to shoot him for sleeping at his post."

"O, yes," and Mr. Lincoln ran his eye over the papers before him. "I remember. It was a fatal sleep. You see, my child, it was a time of special danger. Thousands of lives might have been lost by his culpable negligence."

"So my father said," replied Blossom, gravely. "But poor Bennie was so tired, sir, and Jemmie so weak. He did the work of two, sir, and it was Jemmie's night, not his; but Jemmie was too tired, and Bennie never thought about himself that he was tired too."

"What is this you say, child? Come here, I do not understand," and the kind man caught eagerly as ever at what seemed to be a justification of the offense.

Blossom went to him; he put his hand tenderly on her shoulder and turned up the pale face toward his. How tall he seemed! And he was the President of the United States, too! A dim thought of this kind passed for a minute through Blos-

som's mind, but she told her simple, straightforward story and handed Mr. Lincoln Bennie's letter to read.

He read it carefully; then taking up his pen, wrote a few hasty lines, and rang his bell.

Blossom heard this order: "Send this dispatch at once!"

The President then turned to the girl and said: "Go home, my child, and tell that father of yours, who could approve his country's sentence even when it took the life of a child like that, that Abraham Lincoln thinks the life far too precious to be lost. Go back, or—wait until tomorrow. Bennie will need a change after he has so bravely faced death; he shall go with you."

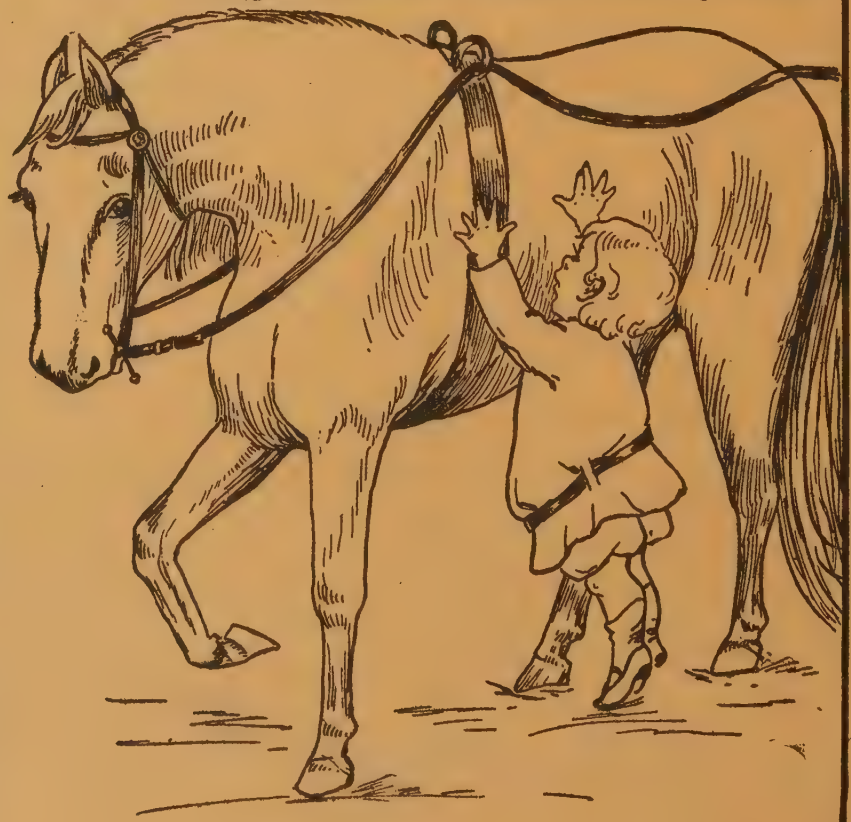
"God bless you, sir!" said Blossom; and who shall doubt that God heard and registered the request?

Two days after this interview, the young soldier came to the White House with his little sister. He was called into the President's private room and a strap fastened upon his shoulder. Mr. Lincoln then said: "The soldier that could carry a sick comrade's baggage and die for the act so uncomplainingly deserves well of his country." Then Bennie and Blossom took their way to their Green Mountain home. A crowd gathered at the mill depot to welcome them back; and as Farmer Owen's hand grasped that of the boy, tears flowed down his cheeks, and he was heard to say fervently:

"The Lord be praised!"

—*From the New York Observer.*

If I had a horse I would call him "Gay,"
Feed and curry him well every day,
Hitch him up in my cart and take a ride,
With Baby Brother tucked in at my side.

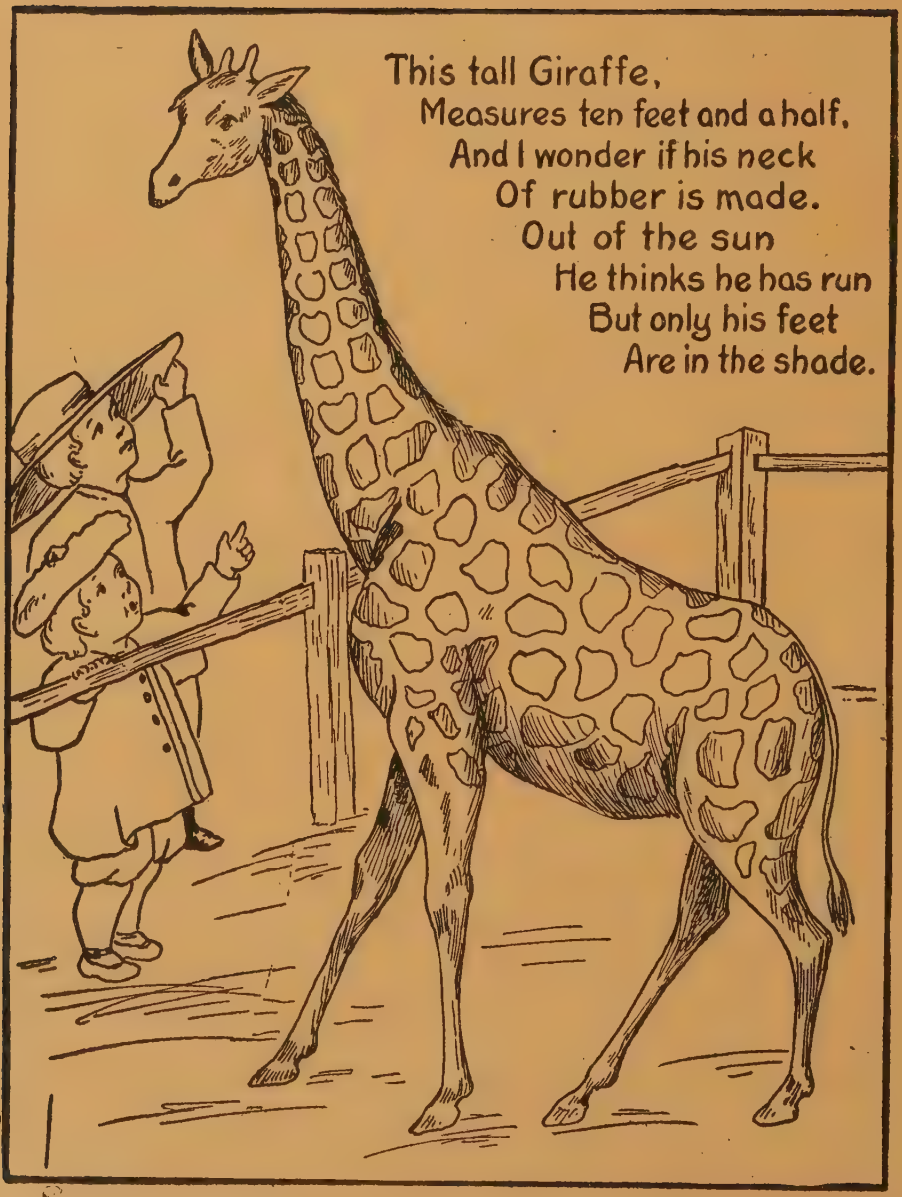


LITTLE BROWN THRUSHES.

LITTLE brown thrushes at sunrise in summer
After the May-flowers have faded away,
Warble to show unto every new-comer
How to hush stars, yet to waken the Day:
Singing first, lullabies, then, jubilates,
Watching the blue sky where every bird's heart is;
Then, as lamenting the day's fading light,
Down through the twilight, when wearied with flight,
Singing divinely, they breathe out, "good-night!"

Little brown thrushes with birds yellow-breasted
Bright as the sunshine that June roses bring,
Climb up and carol o'er hills silver-crested
Just as the bluebirds do in the spring,
Seeing the bees and the butterflies ranging,
Pointed-winged swallows their sharp shadows changing;
But while some sunset is flooding the sky,
Up through the glory the brown thrushes fly,
Singing divinely, "good-night and good-by!"

BY MRS. WHITON-STONE.


This tall Giraffe,
Measures ten feet and a half,
And I wonder if his neck
Of rubber is made.
Out of the sun
He thinks he has run
But only his feet
Are in the shade.

THE STORY OF THE EMPTY SLEEVE.

HERE, sit ye down alongside of me; I'm getting old and gray;
But something in the paper, boy, has riled my blood today.
To steal a purse is mean enough, the most of men agree;
But stealing reputation seems a meaner thing to me.
A letter in the *Herald* says some generals allow
That there wa'n't no fight where Lookout rears aloft its shaggy brow;
But this coat sleeve swinging empty here beside me, boy, to-day,
Tells a mighty different story in a mighty different way.

When sunbeams flashed o'er Mission Ridge that bright November morn,
The misty cap on Lookout's crest gave token of a storm;
For grim King Death had draped the mount in grayish, smoky shrouds—
Its craggy peaks were lost to sight above the fleecy clouds.

Just at the mountain's rocky base we formed in serried lines,
While lightning with its jagged edge played on us from the pines;
The mission ours to storm the pits 'neath Lookout's crest that lay;
We stormed the very "gates of hell" with "Fighting Joe" that day.

The mountain seemed to vomit flames; the boom of heavy guns
Played to Dixie's music, while a treble played the drums:

The eagles waking from their sleep, looked down upon the stars
Slow climbing up the mountain side, with morning's broken bars.

We kept our eyes upon the flag that upward led the way
Until we lost it in the smoke on Lookout side that day;
And then like demons loosed from hell we clambered up the crag,
"Excelsior," our motto, and our mission, "Save the flag."

In answer to the rebel yell we gave a ringing cheer;
We left the rifle-pits behind, the crest loomed upward near;
A light wind playing 'long the peaks just lifted death's gray shroud;
We caught the gleam of silver stars just breaking through the cloud.

A shattered arm hung at my side that day on Lookout's crag,
And yet I'd give the other now to save the dear old flag.
The regimental roll when called on Lookout's crest that night
Was more than doubled by the roll Death called in realms of light.

Just as the sun sank slowly down behind the mountain's crest,
When mountain peaks gave back the fire that flamed along the west,
Swift riding down along the ridge upon a charger white,
Came "Fighting Joe," the hero now of Lookout's famous fight.
He swung his cap as tears of joy slow trickled down his cheek,
And as our cheering died away, the general tried to speak.

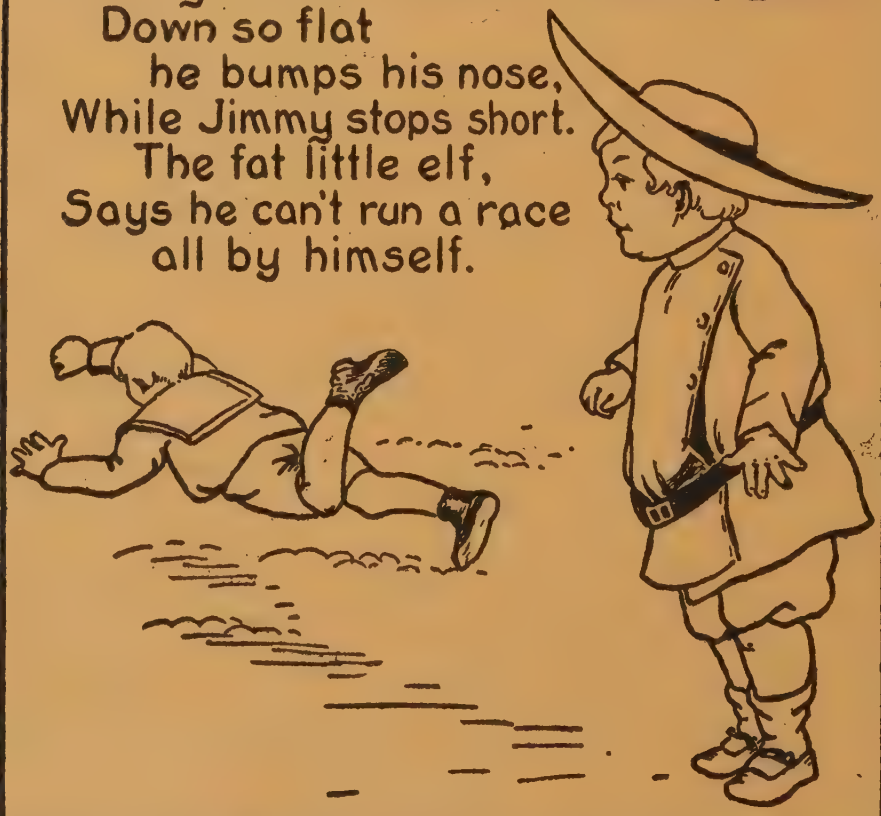
He said, "Boys, I'll court-martial you, yes, every man that's here;
I said to take the rifle pits," we stopped him with a cheer,
"I said to take the rifle pits upon the mountain's edge,
And I'll court-martial you because—because you took the ridge"

Then such a laugh as swept the ridge where late King Death had strode!
And such a cheer as rent the skies, as down our lines he rode!
I'm getting old and feeble, I've not long to live, I know,
But there *was a fight at Lookout.* I was there with "Fighting Joe."

So these generals in the *Herald,* they may reckon and allow
That there warn't no fight at Lookout on the mountain's shaggy brow,
But this empty coat-sleeve swinging here beside me, boy, to-day
Tells a mighty different tale in a mighty different way.

R. L. CARY, JR.

A race! A race! Which will win,
Thin little Harold or chubby Jim?
Surely not Harold for there he goes
Down so flat
he bumps his nose,
While Jimmy stops short.
The fat little elf,
Says he can't run a race
all by himself.



FACING THE WORLD.

LAD I am, mother, the holidays are over. It's quite different going back to school again when one goes to be captain—as I'm sure to be. Isn't it jolly?"

Mrs. Boyd's face as she smiled back at Donald was not exactly "jolly." Still, she did smile; and then there came out the strong likeness often seen between mother and son, even when, as in this case, the features were very dissimilar. Mrs. Boyd was a pretty, delicate little English woman: and Donald took after his father, a big, brawny Scotsman, certainly not pretty, and not always sweet. Poor man! he had of late years had only too much to make him sour.

Though she tried to smile and succeeded, the tears were in Mrs. Boyd's eyes, and her mouth was quivering. But she set it tightly together, and then she looked more than ever like her son, or rather, her son looked like her.

He was too eager in his delight to notice her much. "It is jolly, isn't it, mother? I never thought I'd get to the top of the school at all, for I'm not near so clever as some of the fellows. But now I've got my place; and I like it, and I mean to keep it; you'll be pleased at that, mother?"

"I should have been if—if—" Mrs. Boyd tried to get the words out and failed, closed her eyes as tight as her mouth for a minute, then opened them and looked her boy in the face gravely and sadly.

"It goes to my heart to tell you—I have been waiting to say it all morning, but, Donald, my dear, you will never go back to school at all."

"Not go back; when I'm captain! why, you and father both said that if I got to be that, I should not stop till I was seventeen—and now I'm only fifteen and a half. O, mother, you don't mean it! Father couldn't break his word! I may go back!"

Mrs. Boyd shook her head sadly, and then explained as briefly and calmly as she could the heavy blow which had fallen upon the father, and, indeed, upon the whole family. Mr. Boyd had long been troubled with his eyes, about as serious a trouble as could have befallen a man in his profession—an accountant—as they call it in Scotland. Lately he had made some serious blunders in his arithmetic, and his eyesight was so weak that his wife persuaded him to consult a first-rate Edinburgh oculist, whose opinion, given only yesterday, after many days of anxious suspense, was that in a few months he would become incurably blind.

"Blind, poor father blind!" Donald put his hand before his own eyes. He was too big a boy to cry, or at any rate, to be seen crying, but it was with a choking voice that he spoke next: "I'll be his eyes; I'm old enough."

"Yes; in many ways you are, my son," said Mrs. Boyd, who had had a day and a night to face her sorrow, and knew she must do so calmly. "But you are not old enough to manage the business; your father will require to take a partner immediately, which will reduce our income one-half. Therefore we cannot possibly afford to send you to school again. The little ones must go, they are not nearly educated yet, but you are. You will have to face the world and earn your own living, as soon as ever you can. My poor boy!"

"Don't call me poor, mother. I've got you and father and the rest. And, as you say, I've had a good education so far. And I'm fifteen and a half, no, fifteen and three-quarters—almost a man. I'm not afraid."

"Nor I," said his mother, who had waited a full minute before Donald could find voice to say all this, and it was at last stammered out awkwardly and at random. "No; I am not afraid because my boy has to earn his bread; I had earned mine for years as a governess when father married me. I began work before I was sixteen. My son will have to do the same, that is all."

That day the mother and son spoke no more together. It was as much as they could do to bear their trouble, without talking about it, and besides, Donald was not a boy to "make a fuss" over things. He could meet sorrow when it came, that is, the little of it he had ever known, but he disliked speaking of it, and perhaps he was right.

So he just "made himself scarce" till bedtime, and never said a word to anybody until his mother came into the boys' room to bid them good-night. There were three of them, but all were asleep except Donald. As his mother bent down to kiss him, he put both arms round her neck.

"Mother, I'm going to begin to-morrow."

"Begin what, my son?"

"Facing the world, as you said I must. I can't go to school again, so I mean to try and earn my own living."

"How?"

"I don't quite know, but I'll try. There are several things I could be, a clerk—or even a message-boy. I shouldn't like it, but I'd do anything rather than do nothing."

Mrs. Boyd sat down on the side of the bed. If she felt inclined to cry she had too much sense to show it. She only took firm hold of her boy's hand, and waited for him to speak on.

"I've been thinking, mother, I was to have a new suit at Christmas; will you give it now? And let it be a coat, not a jacket. I'm tall enough—five feet seven last month, and growing

still; I should look almost a man. Then I would go round to every office in Edinburgh and ask if they wanted a clerk. I wouldn't mind taking anything to begin with. And I can write a decent hand, and I'm not bad at figures; as for my Latin and Greek—"

Here Donald gulped down a sigh, for he was a capital classic, and it had been suggested that he should go to Glasgow University and try for "the Snell" which has sent so many clever young Scotsmen to Balliol College, Oxford, and thence on to fame and prosperity. But alas! no college career was now possible to Donald Boyd. The best he could hope for was to earn a few shillings a week as a common clerk. He knew this, and so did his mother. But they never complained. It was no fault of theirs, nor of anybody's. It was just as they devoutly called it, "The will of God."

"Your Latin and Greek may come in some day, my boy," said Mrs. Boyd cheerfully. "Good work is never lost. In the meantime, your plan is a good one, and you shall have your new clothes at once. Then, do as you think best."

"All right; good-night, mother," said Donald, and in five minutes more was fast asleep.

But, though he was much given to sleeping of nights—indeed, he never remembered lying awake for a single hour in his life—during daytime there never was a more "wide awake" boy than Donald Boyd. He kept his eyes open to everything, and never let the "golden minute" slip by him. He never idled about—play he didn't consider idling (nor do I). And I am bound to confess that every day until the new clothes came home was scrupulously spent in cricket, football, and all the other amusements which he was as good at as he was at his lessons. He wanted "to make the best of his holidays," he said, knowing well

that for him holiday time as well as school time was now done, and the work of the world had begun in earnest.

The clothes came home on Saturday night, and he went to church in them on Sunday, to his little sister's great admiration. Still greater was their wonder when, on Monday morning, he appeared in the same suit, looking quite a man, as they unanimously agreed, and almost before breakfast was done, started off, not saying a word of where he was going.

He did not come back till the younger ones were all away to bed, so there was no one to question him, which was fortunate, for they might not have got very smooth answers. His mother saw this, and she also forbore. She was not surprised that the bright, brave face of the morning looked dull and tired, and that evidently Donald had no good news of the day to tell her.

"I think I'll go to bed," was all he said. "Mother, will you give me a 'piece' in my pocket to-morrow? One can walk better when one isn't so desperately hungry."

"Yes, my boy." She kissed him, saw that he was warmed and fed—he had evidently been on his legs the whole day—then sent him off to his bed, where she soon heard him delightfully snoring, oblivious of all his cares.

The same thing went on day after day, for seven days. Sometimes he told his mother what had happened to him and where he had been, sometimes not; what was the good of telling? It was always the same story. Nobody wanted a boy or a man, for Donald, trusting to his inches and his coat, had applied for man's work also, but in vain. Mrs. Boyd was not astonished. She knew how hard it is to get one's foot into ever so small a corner in this busy world, where ten are always struggling for the place of one. Still, she also knew that it never does to give in; that one must leave no stone unturned if one wishes to get work at all. Also she believed firmly in an axiom of her youth

—"Nothing is denied to well-directed labor." But it must be real hard "labor," and it must also be "well directed." So, though her heart ached sorely, as only a mother's can, she never betrayed it, but each morning sent her boy away with a cheerful face, and each evening received him with one, which, if less cheerful, was not less sympathetic, but she never said a word.

At the week's end, in fact, on Sunday morning, as they were walking to church, Donald said to her: "Mother, my new clothes haven't been of the slightest good. I've been all over Edinburgh, to every place I could think of—writers' offices, merchants' offices, wharves, railway-stations—but it's no use. Everybody wants to know where I've been before, and I've been nowhere except to school. I said I was willing to learn, but nobody will teach me; they say they can't afford it. It is like keeping a dog, and barking yourself. Which is only too true," added Donald, with a heavy sigh.

"May be," said Mrs. Boyd. Yet as she looked up at her son —she really did look up at him, he was so tall—she felt that if his honest, intelligent face and manly bearing did not win something at last, what was the world coming to? "My boy," she said, "things are very hard for you, but not harder than for others. I remember once, when I was only a few years older than you, finding myself with only half a crown in my pocket. To be sure it was a whole half-crown, for I had paid every half-penny I owed that morning, but I had no idea where the next half-crown would come from. However, it did come. I earned two pounds ten, the very day after that day."

"Did you really, mother?" said Donald, his eyes brightening. "Then I'll go on. I'll not 'gang awa back to my mither,' as that old gentleman advised me, who objected to bark himself; a queer, crabbed old fellow he was too, but he was the only one who asked my name and address. The rest of them—well,

mother, I've stood a good deal these seven days," Donald added, gulping down something between a "fuff" of wrath and a sob.

"I am sure you have, my boy."

"But I'll hold on; only you'll have to get my boots mended, and meantime, I should like to try a new dodge. My bicycle, it lies in the washing-house; you remember I broke it and you didn't wish it mended, lest I should break something worse than a wheel, perhaps. It wasn't worth while risking my life for mere pleasure, but I want my bicycle now for use. If you let me have it mended, I can go up and down the country for fifty miles in search of work—to Falkirk, Linlithgow, or even Glasgow, and I'll cost you nothing for traveling expenses. Isn't that a bright idea, mother?"

She had not the heart to say no, or to suggest that a boy on a bicycle applying for work was a thing too novel to be eminently successful. But to get work was at once so essential and so hopeless, that she would not throw any cold water on Donald's eagerness and pluck. She hoped too, that, spite of the eccentricity of the notion, some shrewd, kind-hearted gentleman might have sense enough to see the honest purpose of the poor lad who had only himself to depend upon. For his father had now fallen into a state of depression which made all application to him for either advice or help worse than useless. And as both he and Mrs. Boyd had been solitary orphans when they were married, there were no near relatives of any kind to come to the rescue. Donald knew, and his mother knew too, that he must shift for himself, to sink or swim.

So, after two days' rest, which he much needed, the boy went off again "on his own hook," and his bicycle, which was a degree better than his legs, he said, as it saves shoe-leather. Also, he was able to come home pretty regularly at the same hour, which was a great relief to his mother. But he came home nearly as

tired as ever, and with a despondent look which deepened every day. Evidently it was just the same story; no work to be had; or if there was work, it was struggled for by a score of fellows, with age, character, and experience to back them, and Donald had none of the three. But he had one quality, the root of all success in the end, dogged perseverance.

There is a saying, that we British gain our victories, not because we are never beaten, but because we never will see that we are beaten, and so go on fighting till we win. "Never say die," was Donald's word to his mother night after night. But she knew that those who never *say* die, sometimes *do* die, quite quietly, and she watched with a sore heart her boy growing thinner and more worn, even though brown as a berry with constant exposure all day long to wind and weather, for it was now less autumn than winter.

After a fortnight, Mrs. Boyd made up her mind that this could not go on any longer, and said so. "Very well," Donald answered, accepting her decision as he had been in the habit of doing all his life.—Mrs. Boyd's children knew very well that whatever her will was, it was sure to be a just and wise will, herself being the last person she ever thought of.—"Yes, I'll give in, if you think I ought, for it's only wearing out myself and my clothes to no good. Only let me have one day more and I'll go as far as ever I can, perhaps to Dunfermline, or even Glasgow."

She would not forbid, and once more she started him off with a cheerful face in the twilight of the wet October morning, and sat all day long in the empty house—for the younger ones were now all going to school again—thinking sorrowfully of her eldest, whose merry school days were done forever.

In the dusk of the afternoon a card was brought up to her, with the message that an old gentleman was waiting below, wishing to see her.

A shudder ran through the poor mother, who, like many another mother, hated bicycles, and never had an easy mind when Donald was away on his. The stranger's first word was anything but reassuring.

"Beg pardon ma'am, but is your name Boyd, and have you a son called Donald, who went out on a bicycle this morning?"

"Yes, yes! Has anything happened? Tell me quick!"

"I'm not aware, ma'am, that anything has happened," said the old gentleman. "I saw the lad at light this morning. He seemed to be managing his machine uncommonly well. I met him at the foot of a hill near Edinburgh Castle. He had got off and was walking; so he saw me, and took off his cap. I like respect, especially in a young fellow towards an old one."

"Did he know you, for I have not that pleasure?" said Mrs. Boyd. polite, though puzzled. For the old man did not look quite like a gentleman, and spoke with the strong accent of an uneducated person, yet he had a kindly expression, and seemed honest and well-meaning, though decidedly "canny."

"I cannot say he knew me, but he remembered me, which was civil of him. And then I minded the lad as the one that had come to me for work a week or two ago, and I took his name and address. That's your son's writing?" he jumbled out and showed a scrap of paper. "It's *bona fide,* isn't it?

"And he really is in search of work? He hasn't run away from home, or been turned out by his father for misconduct, or anything of that sort? He isn't a scamp, or a ne'er-do-weel?"

"I hope he doesn't look like it," said Mrs. Boyd, proudly.

"No, ma'am; you're right, he doesn't. He carries his character in his face which, maybe, is better than in his pocket. It was that which made me ask his name and address, though I could do nothing for him."

"Then you were the gentleman who told him you couldn't

keep a dog and bark yourself?" said Mrs. Boyd, amused, and just a shade hopeful.

"Precisely. Nor can I. It would have been cool impudence in a lad to come and ask to be taught his work first and then paid for it, if he hadn't been so very much in earnest that I was rather sorry for him. I'm inclined to believe, from the talk I had with him at the foot of the brae to-day, that he is a young dog that would bark with uncommon little teaching. Material, ma'am, is what we want. I don't care for its being raw material, if it's only of the right sort. I've made up my mind to try your boy."

"Thank God!"

"What did you say, ma'am? But—I beg your pardon."

For he saw that Mrs. Boyd had quite broken down. In truth, the strain had been so long and so great that this sudden relief was quite too much for her. She sobbed heartily.

"I ought to beg your pardon," she said at last, "for being so foolish, but we have had hard times of late."

And then, in a few simple words, she told Donald's whole story.

The old man listened to it in silence. Sometimes he nodded his head, or beat his chin on his stout stick as he sat; but he made no comment whatever, except a brief "Thank you, ma'am."

"Now to business," continued he, taking out his watch; "for I'm due at dinner; and I always keep my appointments, even with myself. I hope your Donald is a punctual lad?"

"Yes. He promised to be back by dark, and I am sure he will be. Could you not wait?"

"No. I never wait for anybody; but keep nobody waiting for me. I'm Bethune & Co., Leith Merchants—practically, old John Bethune, who began life as a message-boy, and has done pretty well, considering."

He had, as Mrs. Boyd was well aware. Bethune & Co. was a name so well known that she could hardly believe in her boy's good luck in getting into that house in any capacity whatever.

"So all is settled," said Mr. Bethune, rising. "Let him come to me on Monday morning, and I'll see what he is fit for. He'll have to start at the very bottom—sweep the office, perhaps—I did it myself once—and I'll give him—let me see—ten shillings a week to begin with."

"'To begin with,'" repeated Mrs. Boyd, gently but firmly; "but he will soon be worth more. I am sure of that."

"Very well. When I see what stuff he is made of, he shall have a rise. But I never do things at haphazard; and it's easier going up than coming down. I'm not a benevolent man, Mrs. Boyd, and you need not think it. But I've fought the world pretty hard myself, and I like to help those that are fighting it. Good evening. Isn't that your son coming round the corner? Well, he's back exact to his time, at any rate. Tell him I hope he will be as punctual on Monday morning. Good evening, ma'am."

Now, if this were an imaginary story, I might wind it up by a delightful *denouement* of Mr. Bethune's turning out an old friend of the family, or developing into a new one, and taking such a fancy to Donald that he immediately gave him a clerkship with a large salary, and the promise of a partnership on coming of age, or this worthy gentleman should be an eccentric old bachelor who immediately adopted that wonderful boy and befriended the whole Boyd family.

But neither of these things, nor anything else remarkable, happened in the real story, which, as it is literally true, though told with certain necessary disguises, I prefer to keep to as closely as I can. Such astonishing bits of "luck" do not happen in real life, or happen so rarely that one inclines, at least, to believe very

little in either good or ill fortune, as a matter of chance. There is always something at the back of it which furnishes a key to the whole. Practically, a man's lot is of his own making. He may fail, for a while undeservedly, or he may succeed undeservedly, but, in the long run, time brings its revenges and its rewards.

As it did to Donald Boyd. He has not been taken into the house of Bethune & Co., as a partner; and it was long before he became even a clerk—at least with anything like a high salary. For Mr. Bethune, so far from being an old bachelor, had a large family to provide for, and was bringing up several of his sons to his own business, so there was little room for a stranger. But a young man who deserves to find room generally does find it, or make it. And though Donald started at the lowest rung of the ladder, he may climb to the top yet.

He had "a fair field, and no favor." Indeed, he neither wished nor asked favor. He determined to stand on his own feet from the first. He had hard work and few holidays, made mistakes, found them out and corrected them, got sharp words and bore them, learnt his own weak points and—not so easily—his strong ones. Still he did learn them; for, unless you can trust yourself, be sure nobody else will trust you.

This was Donald's great point. *He was trusted.* People soon found out that they might trust him; that he always told the truth, and never pretended to do more than he could do; but that which he could do, they might depend upon his doing, punctually, accurately, carefully, and never leaving off till it was done. Therefore, though others might be quicker, sharper, more "up to things" than he, there was no one so reliable, and it soon got to be a proverb in the office of Bethune & Co.—and other offices, too—"If you wish a thing done, go to Boyd."

I am bound to say this, for I am painting no imaginary portrait, but describing an individual who really exists, and who

may be met any day walking about Edinburgh, though his name is not Donald Boyd, and there is no such firm as Bethune & Co. But the house he does belong to values the young fellow so highly that there is little doubt he will rise in it, and rise in every way, probably to the very top of the tree, and tell his children and grandchildren the story which, in its main features, I have recorded here, of how he first began facing the world.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

We went to the Zoo the Leopard to see,
But found him an unsociable fellow.
He would not look at us or say where he bought
His polka-dot suit of yellow.

ROBERT OF LINCOLN.

MERRILY swinging on briar and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name;
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe in that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gayly dressed.
Wearing a bright black wedding coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest,
Hear him calling his merry note:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a quiet life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creatures; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she,
One weak chirp is her only note,
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can.
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seed for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air,

ROBERT OF LINCOLN.

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Riggity-rig,
Dance a jig,
Dance a Highland Fling;
Dance a Cake-walk,
Give us a Clog,
Or cut a
Pigeon's Wing.

U. S. SPELLS US.

MY papa's all dressed up to-day;
He never looked so fine;
I thought when I first looked at him
My papa wasn't mine.

He's got a beautiful new suit
The old one was so old—
It's blue, with buttons, oh, so bright,
I guess they must be gold.

And papa's sort o' glad and sort
O' sad—I wonder why;
And ev'ry time she looks at him
It makes my mamma cry.

Who's Uncle Sam? My papa says
That he belongs to him;
But papa's joking, 'cause he knows
My uncle's name is Jim.

My papa just belongs to me
And mamma. And I guess
The folks are blind who cannot see
His buttons marked U. S.

U. S. spells Us. He's ours—and yet
My mamma can't help cry,
And papa tries to smile at me
And can't—I wonder why.

ANON.

A dancing Bear came down the street;
The children all ran to see the treat;
Said the keeper: "Now, boys, come pay for your fun;
Give me a penny to buy Bruin a bun."

"DIXIE" AND "YANKEE DOODLE."

I WAS born 'way down in "Dixie,"
Reared beneath the Southern skies,
And they didn't have to teach me
Every "Yankee" to despise.

I was but a country youngster
When I donned a suit of gray,
When I shouldered my old musket,
And marched forth the "Yanks" to slay.

Four long years I fought and suffered,
"Dixie" was my battle cry;
"Dixie" always and forever,
Down in "Dixie" let me die.

And to-night I'm down in "Dixie,"
"Dixie" still so grand and true;
But to-night I am appareled
In a uniform of blue.

And to-night the band is playing;
'Tis not "Dixie's" strains I hear,
But the strains of "Yankee Doodle"
Ring out strong and clear.

Long I listen to the music;
By my side a comrade stands;
He's a "Yank" and I'm a "Rebel,"
But we grasp each other's hands.

Here together we united
'Way down South in "Dixie" stand,
And my comrade whispers softly,
"There's no land like 'Dixie's land.'"

But my eyes are filled with teardrops,
Tears that make my heart feel glad;
And I whisper to my comrade:
"'Yankee Doodle' ain't so bad."

LAWRENCE PORCHER HEXT.

A game of marbles
We were having one day,
When Baby chanced
to come along that way.
Too little he was
to join our game,
But he pocketed our marbles
just the same.

THE BAREFOOT BOY.

LESSINGS on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan;
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace!
From my heart I give thee joy;
I was once a barefoot boy.

Prince thou art—the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy,
In the reach of ear and eye:
Outward sunshine, inward joy.
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

O! for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools:
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild flower's time and place,
Flight of fowl, and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,

How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the ground-nut trails its vine,
Where the wood grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans!
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy.
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

O for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for!
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight,
Through the day and through the night;
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;

Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still, as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too,
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

O! for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread,
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the door-stone, gray and rude!
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent:
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;
While, for music, came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;
And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch; pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy.

Cheerily then, my little man!
Live and laugh as boyhood can;
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat;

All too soon those feet must hide
In the prison-cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil:
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

Gallop, gallop! far away.
Pony and I are going today.
Please get out of our way,
Don't ask us to stay;
We'll both come back
some sunshiny day.

BABOUSCKA.

IF you were a Russian child you would not watch to see Santa Klaus come down the chimney; but you would stand by the windows to catch a peep at poor Babouscka as she hurries by.

Who is Babouscka? Is she Santa Klaus' wife?

No, indeed. She is only a poor little crooked wrinkled old woman, who comes at Christmas time into everybody's house, who peeps into every cradle, turns back every coverlid, drops a tear on the baby's white pillow, and goes away very, very sorrowful.

And not only at Christmas time, but through all the cold winter, and especially in March, when the wind blows loud, and whistles and howls and dies away like a sigh, the Russian children hear the rustling step of the Babouscka. She is always in a hurry. One hears her running fast along the crowded streets and over the quiet country fields. She seems to be out of breath and tired, yet she hurries on.

Whom is she trying to overtake?

She scarcely looks at the little children as they press their rosy faces against the window pane and whisper to each other, "Is the Babouscka looking for us?"

No, she will not stop; only on Christmas eve will she come up-stairs into the nursery and give each little one a present. You must not think she leaves handsome gifts such as Santa Klaus brings for you. She does not bring bicycles to the boys or French dolls to the girls. She does not come in a gay little sleigh drawn by reindeer, but hobbling along on foot, and she leans on a crutch. She has her old apron filled with candy and

cheap toys, and the children all love her dearly. They watch to see her come, and when one hears a rustling, he cries, "Lo! the Babouscka!" then all others look, but one must turn one's head very quickly or she vanishes. I never saw her myself.

Best of all, she loves little babies, and often, when the tired mothers sleep, she bends over their cradles, puts her brown, wrinkled face close down to the pillow and looks very sharply.

What is she looking for?

Ah, that you can't guess unless you know her sad story.

Long, long ago, a great many yesterdays ago, the Babouscka, who was even then an old woman, was busy sweeping her little hut. She lived in the coldest corner of cold Russia, and she lived alone in a lonely place where four wide roads met. These roads were at this time white with snow, for it was winter time. In the summer, when the fields were full of flowers and the air full of sunshine and singing birds, Babouscka's home did not seem so very quiet; but in the winter, with only the snow-flakes and the shy snow-birds and the loud wind for company, the little old woman felt very cheerless. But she was a busy old woman, and as it was already twilight, and her home but half swept, she felt in a great hurry to finish her work before bed-time. You must know the Babouscka was poor and could not afford to do her work by candle-light.

Presently, down the widest and the lonesomest of the white roads, there appeared a long train of people coming. They were walking slowly, and seemed to be asking each other questions as to which way they should take. As the procession came nearer, and finally stopped outside the little hut, Babouscka was frightened at the splendor. There were Three Kings, with crowns on their heads, and the jewels on the Kings' breastplates sparkled like sunlight. Their heavy fur cloaks were white with the falling snow-flakes, and the queer humpy camels on which

they rode looked white as milk in the snow-storm. The harness on the camels was decorated with gold, and plates of silver adorned the saddles. The saddle-cloths were of the richest Eastern stuffs, and all the servants had the dark eyes and hair of an Eastern people.

The slaves carried heavy loads on their backs, and each of the Three Kings carried a present. One carried a beautiful transparent jar, and in the fading light Babouscka could see in it a golden liquid which she knew from its color must be myrrh. Another had in his hand a richly woven bag, and it seemed to be heavy, as indeed it was, for it was full of gold. The third had a stone vase in his hand, and from the rich perfume which filled the snowy air, one could guess the vase to have been filled with incense.

Babouscka was terribly frightened, so she hid herself in her hut, and let the servants knock a long time at her door before she dared open it and answer their questions as to the road they should take to a far-away town. You know she had never studied a geography lesson in her life, was old and stupid and scared. She knew the way across the fields to the nearest village, but she know nothing else of all the wide world full of cities. The servants scolded, but the Three Kings spoke kindly to her, and asked her to accompany them on their journey that she might show them the way as far as she knew it. They told her, in words so simple that she could not fail to understand, that they had seen a Star in the sky and were following it to a little town where a young Child lay. The snow was in the sky now, and the Star was lost out of sight.

"Who is the Child?" asked the old woman.

"He is a King, and we go to worship him," they answered. "These presents of gold, frankincense and myrrh are for Him.

When we find Him we will take the crowns off our heads and lay them at His feet. Come with us, Babouscka!"

What do you suppose? Shouldn't you have thought the poor little woman would have been glad to leave her desolate home on the plains to accompany these Kings on their journey?

But the foolish woman shook her head. No, the night was dark and cheerless, and her little home was warm and cosy. She looked up into the sky, and the Star was nowhere to be seen. Besides, she wanted to put her hut in order—perhaps she would be ready to go to-morrow. But the Three Kings could not wait; so when to-morrow's sun rose they were far ahead on their journey. It seemed like a dream to poor Babouscka, for even the tracks of the camels' feet were covered by the deep white snow. Everything was the same as usual; and to make sure that the night's visitors had not been a fancy, she found her old broom hanging on a peg behind the door, where she had put it when the servants knocked.

Now that the sun was shining, and she remembered the glitter of the gold and the smell of the sweet gums and myrrh, she wished she had gone with the travelers.

And she thought a great deal about the dear Baby the Three Kings had gone to worship. She had no children of her own—nobody loved her—ah, if she had only gone! The more she brooded on the thought, the more miserable she grew, till the very sight of her home became hateful to her.

It is a dreadful feeling to realize that one has lost a chance of happiness. There is a feeling called remorse that can gnaw like a sharp little tooth. Babouscka felt this little tooth cut into her heart every time she remembered the visit of the Three Kings.

After a while the thought of the Little Child became her first thought at waking and her last at night. One day she shut

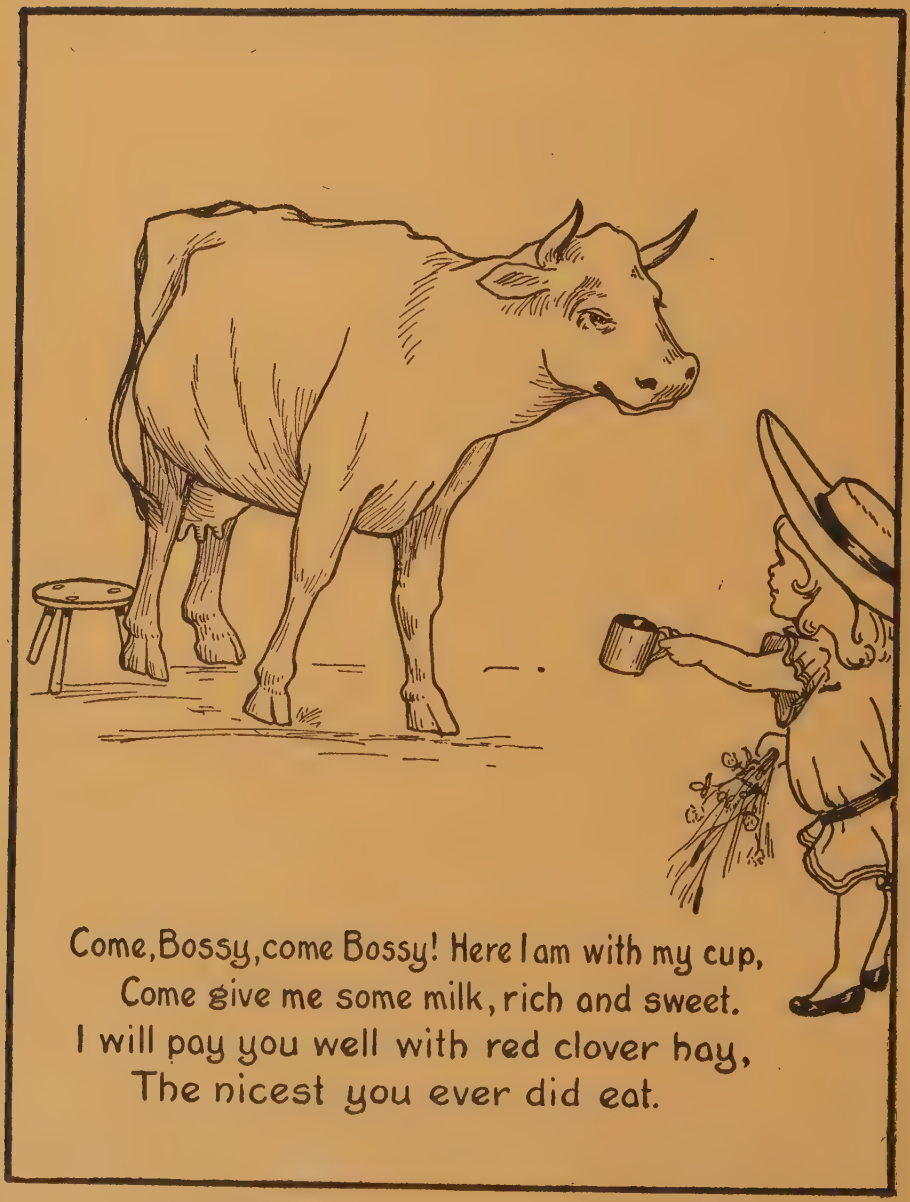
the door of her house forever, and set out on a long journey. She had no hope of overtaking the Three Kings, but she longed to find the Child, that she too might love and worship Him. She asked every one she met, and some people thought her crazy, but others gave her kind answers. Have you perhaps guessed that the young Child whom the Three Kings sought was our Lord himself?

People told Babouscka how He was born in a manger, and many other things which you children have learned long ago. These answers puzzled the old dame mightily. She had but one idea in her ignorant head. The Three Kings had gone to seek a Baby. She would, if not too late, seek Him too.

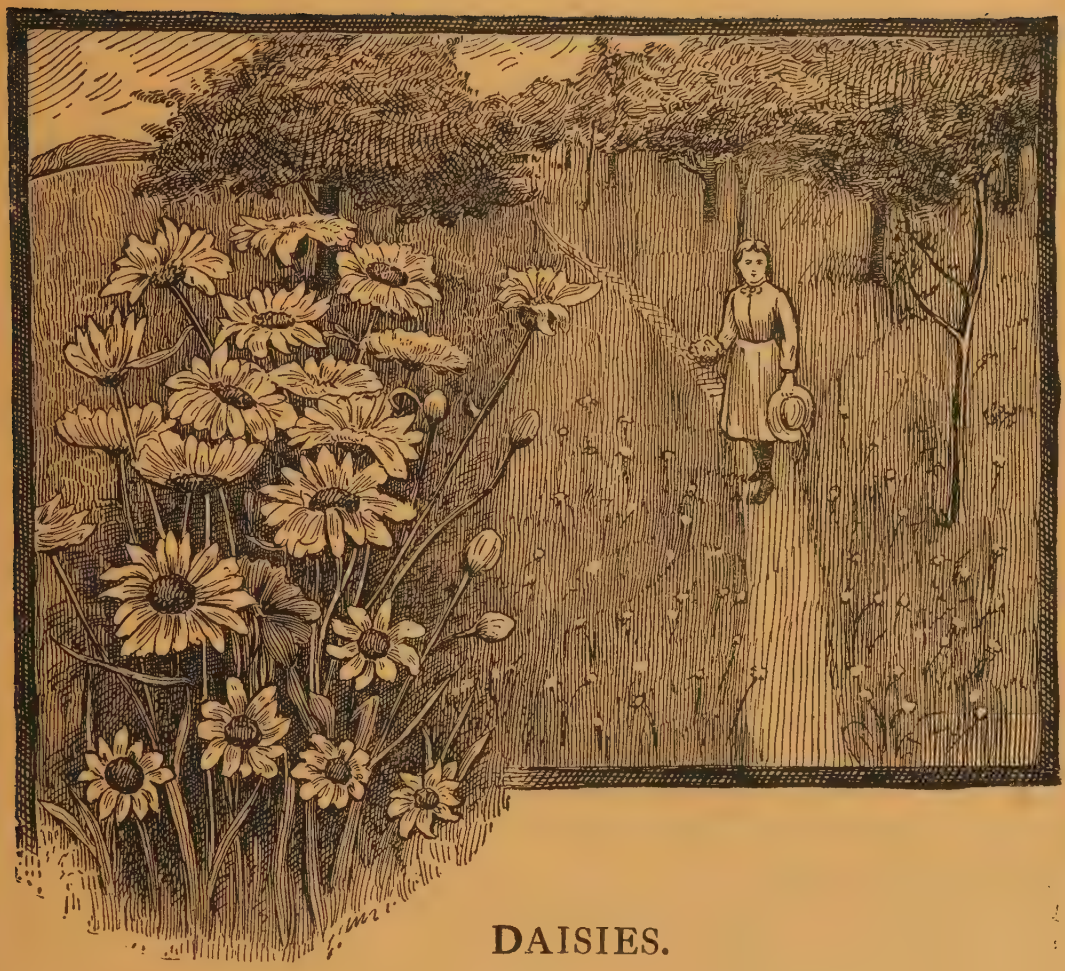
She forgot, I am sure, how many long years had gone by. She looked in vain for the Christ-child in His manger-cradle. She spent all her little savings in toys and candy so as to make friends with little children, that they might not run away when she came hobbling into their nurseries.

Now you know for whom she is sadly seeking when she pushes back the bed-curtains and bends down over each baby's pillow. Sometimes, when the old grandmother sits nodding by the fire, and the bigger children sleep in their beds, old Babouscka comes hobbling into the room, and whispers softly, "Is the young Child here?"

Ah, no; she has come too late, too late. But the little children know her and love her. Two thousand years ago she lost the chance of finding Him. Crooked, wrinkled, old, sick and sorry, she yet lives on, looking into each baby's face—always disappointed, always seeking. Will she find Him at last?



Come, Bossy, come Bossy! Here I am with my cup,
Come give me some milk, rich and sweet.
I will pay you well with red clover hay,
The nicest you ever did eat.



DAISIES.

Daisies!
Low in the grass and high in the clover,
Starring the green earth over and over,
Now into white waves tossing and breaking,
Like a foaming sea when the wind is waking,
Now standing upright, tall and slender,
Showing their deep hearts' golden splendor;
Daintily bending,
Airily lending

Garlands of flowers for earth's adorning,
Fresh with the dew of a summer morning;
High on the slope, low in the hollow,
Where eye can reach or foot can follow,
Shining with innocent fearless faces
Out of the depths of lonely places,
Till the glad heart sings their praises
—Here are the daisies!
The daisies!

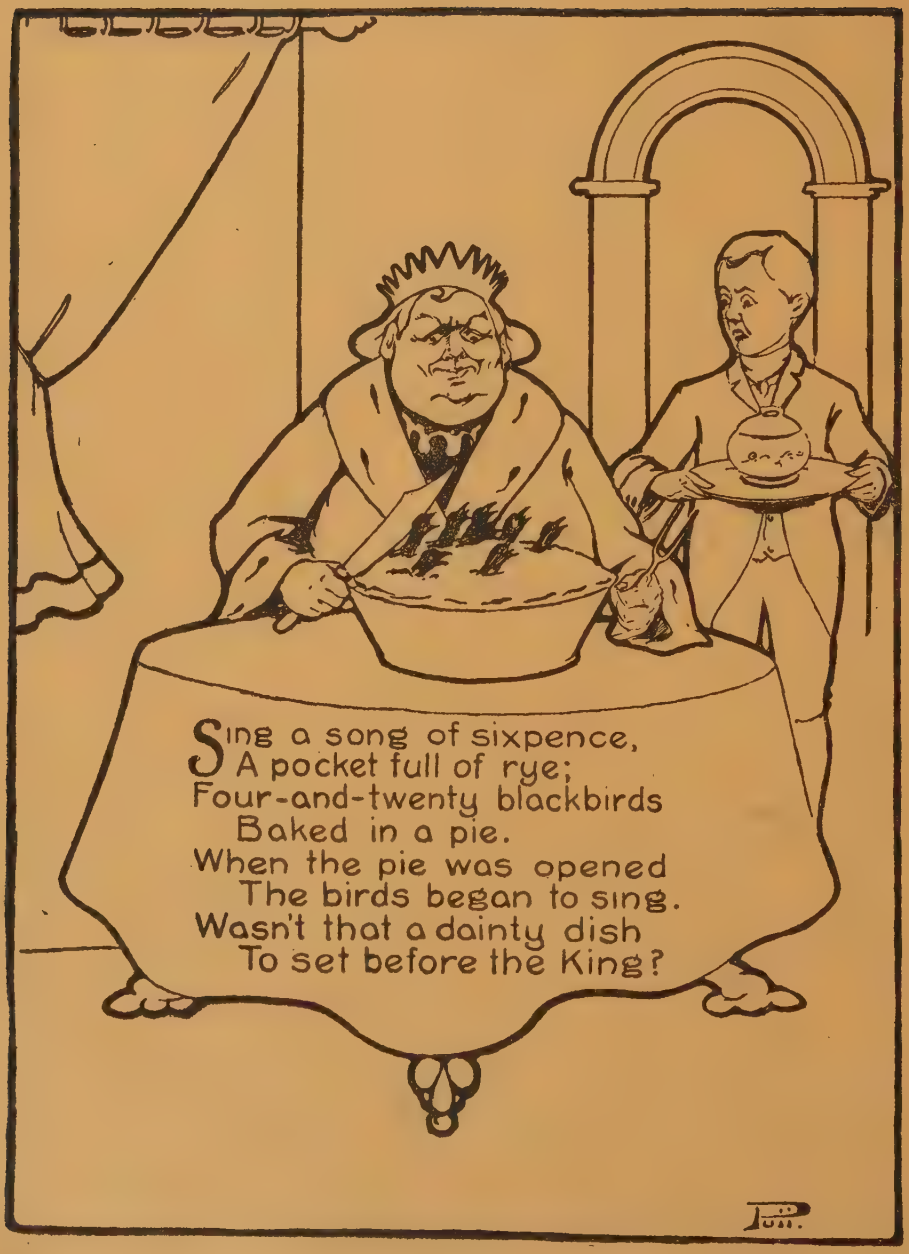
Daisies!
See them ebbing and flowing,
Like tides with the full moon going;
Spreading their generous largess free
For hand to touch and for eye to see;
In dust of the wayside growing,
On rock-ribbed upland blowing,
By meadow brooklets glancing,
On barren fields a-dancing,
Till the world forgets to burrow and grope,
And rises aloft on the wings of hope;
—Oh! of all posies,
Lilies or roses,
Sweetest or fairest,
Richest or rarest,
That earth in its joy to heaven upraises,
Give me the daisies!

Why? For they glow with the spirit of youth,
Their beautiful eyes have the glory of truth,
Down before all their rich bounty they fling
—Free to the beggar, and free to the king—

Loving they stoop to the lowliest ways,
Joyous they brighten the dreariest days;
Under the fringe of their raiment they hide
Scars the gray winter hath opened so wide;
Freely and brightly—
Who can count lightly
Gifts with such generous ardor proffered,
Tokens of love from such full heart's offered,
Or look without glances of joy and delight
At pastures star-covered from morning till night,
When the sunshiny field ablaze is
With daisies!

Daisies,
Your praise is,
That you are like maidens, as maidens should be,
Winsome with freshness, and wholesome to see,
Gifted with beauty, and joy to the eye,
Head lifted daintily—yet not too high—
Sweet with humility, radiant with love,
Generous too as the sunshine above,
Swaying with sympathy, tenderly bent
On hiding the scar and on healing the rent,
Innocent—looking the world in the face,
Yet fearless with nature's own innocent grace,
Full of sweet goodness, yet simple in art,
White in the soul, and pure gold in the heart
—Ah, like unto you should all maidenhood be
Gladsome to know, and most gracious to see;
Like you, my daisies!

M. E. B


Sing a song of sixpence,
A pocket full of rye;
Four-and-twenty blackbirds
Baked in a pie.
When the pie was opened
The birds began to sing.
Wasn't that a dainty dish
To set before the King?

The King was in the parlor
Counting out his money;
The Queen was in the kitchen
Eating bread and honey;
The maid was in the garden
Hanging up the clothes,
There came a little blackbird
And picked off her nose.

DRIVING HOME THE COWS.

UT of the clover and blue-eyed grass,
He turned them into the river lane;
One after another he let them pass,
Then fastened the meadow bars again.

Along by the willows and over the hill
He patiently followed their sober pace—
The merry whistle for once was still
And something shadowed the sunny face.

Only a boy, and his father had said
He never could let his youngest go,
Two already were lying dead
Under the feet of the trampling foe.

But, after the evening work was done,
And the frogs were loud in the meadow swamp,
Over his shoulder he slung his gun
And stealthily followed the footpath damp.

Across the clover and through the wheat,
With resolute heart and purpose grim,
Though cold was the dew on his hurrying feet,
And the blind bat's flitting startled him.

Thrice since then have the lanes been white
And the orchards sweet with apple bloom,
And now when the cows came back at night
The feeble father drove them home;

DRIVING HOME THE COWS.

For news had come to the lonely farm
That three were lying where two had lain,
And the old man's tremulous, palsied arm
Could never lean on a son's again.

The summer day grew cool and late,
He went for the cows when his work was done,
But down the lane, as he opened the gate,
He saw them coming, one by one.

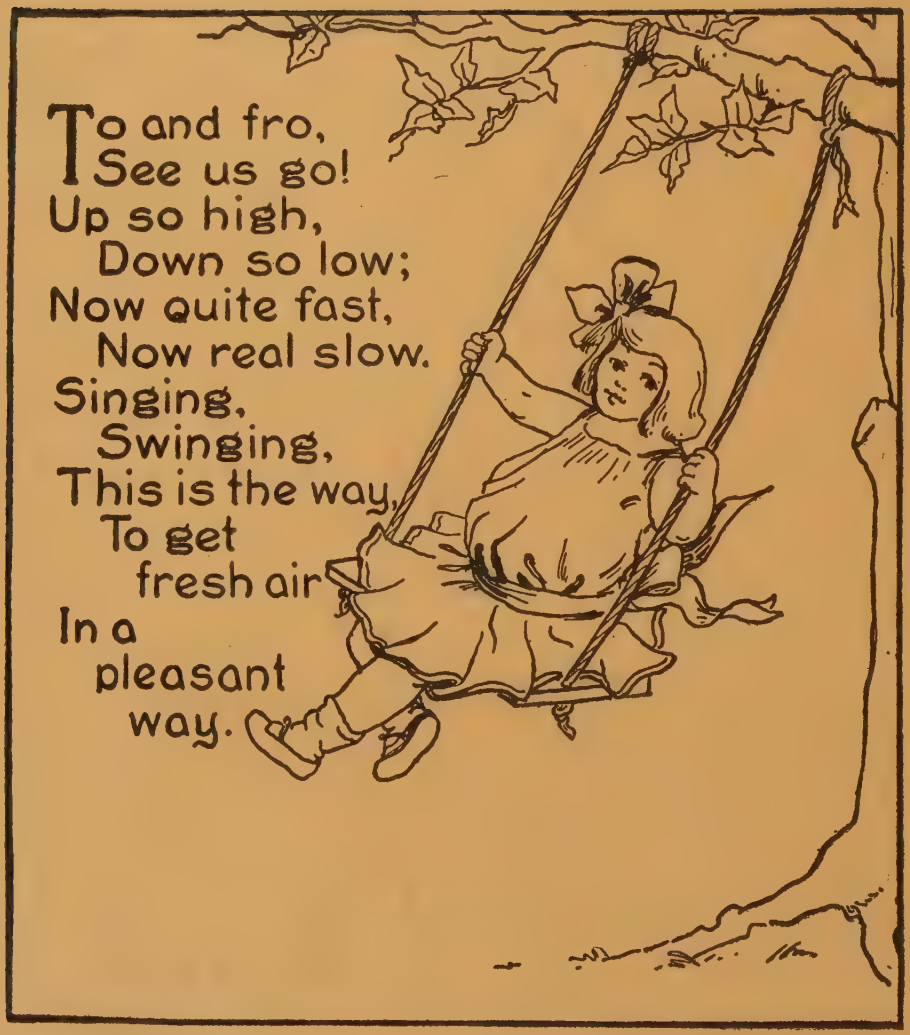
Brindle and Ebony, Speckle and Bess,
Tossing their horns in the evening wind,
Cropping the buttercups out of the grass,
But who was it following close behind?

Loosely swung in the idle air
The empty sleeve of army blue,
And worn and pale through its crisped hair
Looked out a face that the father knew.

For Southern prisons will sometimes yawn
And yield their dead to life again,
And the day that comes with a cloudy dawn
In golden glory at last may wane.

The great tears sprang to their meeting eyes,
For the hearts must speak when the lips are dumb,
And under the silent evening skies
Together they followed the cattle home.

KATE PUTNAM OSGOOD.


To and fro,
See us go!
Up so high,
Down so low;
Now quite fast,
Now real slow.
Singing,
Swinging,
This is the way,
To get
fresh air
In a
pleasant
way.

THE BABY'S KISS.

AN INCIDENT OF THE CIVIL WAR.

ROUGH and ready the troopers ride,
Pistol in holster and sword by side;
They have ridden long, they have ridden hard,
They are travel-stained and battle-scarred;
The hard ground shakes with their martial tramp,
And coarse is the laugh of the men of the camp.

They reach the spot where a mother stands
With a baby shaking its little hands,
Laughing aloud at the gallant sight
Of the mounted soldiers, fresh from the fight.
The captain laughs out, "I will give you this,
A bright piece of gold, your baby to kiss."

"My darling's kisses cannot be sold,
But gladly he'll kiss a soldier bold."
He lifts up the babe with a manly grace,
And covers with kisses its smiling face.
Its rosy cheeks and its dimpled charms,
And it crows with delight in the soldier's arms.

"Not all for the captain," the troopers call;
"The baby, we know, has a kiss for all."
To each soldier's breast the baby is pressed
By the strong rough men, and kissed and caressed.
And louder it laughs, and the lady's face
Wears a mother's smile at the fond embrace.

"Just such a kiss," cried one warrior grim,
"When I left my boy I gave to him;"
"And just such a kiss on the parting day,
I gave to my girl as asleep she lay."
Such were the words of these soldiers brave,
And their eyes were moist when the kiss they gave.

ANON.

"Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?"
"Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full;
One for my master and one for my dame,
And one for the little boy who lives in the lane.

Tommy Bangs looks quite smart,
Driving along in his new goat cart,
But Tommy's not one of your selfish boys,
With every baby he shares his joys,
Takes them to ride and lets them drive,
Of course, they like Tommy
the best boy alive.

THE LOST DIAMOND SNUFF BOX.

THE grand old kingdom of England, in the course of the mossy centuries you can count over its head, has had its times of gloom and depression at dangers that looked near, and its times of shouting and rejoicing over dangers its brave men have driven away quite out of sight again.

One of the deepest seasons of gloom was when the French Emperor, Napoleon, had conquered one country after another, until there was scarcely anything but England left to attack; and one of the proudest times of rejoicing was when the "Iron Duke" Wellington, and the bluff old Prussian, Blücher, met him at Waterloo, defeated his armies and drove him from the field. There were bonfires, and bell-ringings then, and from that day onward England loved and cherished every man who had fought at Waterloo—from the "Duke" himself down to the plainest private, every one was a hero and a veteran.

In one of the humblest houses of a proud nobleman's estate, a low, whitewashed cottage, one of these veterans lived not so very many years ago. He had fought by his flag in one of the most gallant regiments until the last hour of the battle, and then had fallen disabled from active service for the rest of his life.

That did not seem to be of so very great consequence though, just now; for peace reigned in the land, and with his wife and two beautiful daughters to love, his battles to think over, and his pension to provide the bread and coffee, the old soldier was as happy as the day was long. It made no difference that the bread and the coffee were both black, and the clothes of the veteran were coarse and seldom new.

"Ho, Peggy!" he used to say to his wife, "my cloak is as fine

as the one the 'Iron Duke' wore when they carried me past him just as the French were breaking; and as for the bread, only a veteran knows how the recollection of victory makes everything taste sweet!"

But it seemed as if the old soldier's life was going to prove like his share in that great day at Waterloo—success and victory till the end had nearly come, and then one shot after another striking him with troubles, he could never get over.

The first came in the midst of the beautiful summer days, when the bees droned through the delicious air, the rose-bush was in full bloom, and the old soldier sat in the cottage door reveling in it all. A slow, merciless fever rose up through the soft air—it did not venture near the high ground where the castle stood, but it crept noiselessly into the whitewashed cottage, one night, and the soldier's two daughters were stricken down. This was the beginning of terrible trouble to the veteran of Waterloo. Not that he minded watching, for he was used to standing sentry all night, and as for nursing, he had seen plenty in the hospital; but to see his daughters suffering—that was what he could not bear!

And worst of all, between medicines and necessaries for the sick, the three months' pension was quite used up, and when the old soldier's nursing had pulled through the fierceness of the fever, there was nothing but black bread left in the house—and black bread was almost the same as no bread at all to the dainty appetities the fever had left; and that was what he had to think of, and think of, as he sat in the cottage door.

"Bah!" said the old soldier, with something more like a groan than was ever heard from him while his wounds were being dressed, "I could face all the armies of Napoleon better than this!"

And he sat more and more in the cottage door, as if that

could leave the trouble behind; but it stood staring before him, all the same, till it almost shut the rosebush and the bees out of sight. But one morning a tremendous surprise came to him like a flash out of the sky! He heard the sound of galloping troops, and he pricked up his ears, for that always made him think of a cavalry charge.

"Who goes there?" he cried; but without answering his challenge the sound came nearer and nearer, and a lackey in full livery dashed up to the door, and presented him with a note sealed with the blood-red seal of the castle arms. It was an invitation to dine at the castle with a company of noblemen and officers of the army. His lordship, who had also fought at Waterloo, had just learned that a comrade was living on his estate, and made haste to do him honor, and secure a famous guest for his dinner party.

The old soldier rose up proudly, and gave the lackey a military salute.

"Tell his lordship," he said, "that I shall report myself at headquarters, and present my thanks for the honor he has done me."

The lackey galloped off, and the veteran pushed his chair over with his wooden leg, and clattered across the cottage floor.

"Ho, Peggy!" he cried, "did I not say that luck comes and trouble flies if you only face the enemy long enough? This is the beginning of good things, I tell you! A hero of Waterloo, and fit to dine with lords and generals, will certainly have other good fortune coming to him, till he can keep his wife and daughters like princesses. Just wait a bit and you shall see!" and he turned hastily away, for his heart came up in his throat so that he could not speak.

All the rest of that day he sat in the door, brushing and darning and polishing his stained uniform. It had lain abandoned

on the shelf for many a year, but before night every button was shining like gold, the scarlet cloth was almost fresh once more, and the old soldier, wrapped in his faithful cloak, was making his way joyfully across the heathery moors to the castle quite at the other side.

But when he had fairly reached it, and the servant had shown him into the drawing-room, his heart almost failed him for a moment. Such splendor he had never seen before—a thousandth part would have bought health and happiness for the dear ones he had left with only his brave goodbye and a fresh rose-bud to comfort them!

However, what with the beautiful ladies of the castle gathering round him to ask questions about the battle, and with a seat near his lordship's right hand at dinner, he soon plucked up again, and began to realize how delightful everything was. But that was the very thing that almost spoiled the whole again, for when he saw his plate covered with luxuries and delicacies more than he could possibly eat, the thought of the black bread he had left at the cottage brought the tears rushing to his eyes.

But, "Tut!" he said to himself in great dismay, "what an ungrateful poltroon his lordship will think he has brought here!" and he managed to brush them off while no one was looking.

It was delicious, though, in spite of everything, and after a while the wine began to flow—that warmed his very heart—and then he heard his lordship calling to a servant to bring him something from his private desk, saying:

"Gentlemen, I am about to show you the proudest treasure I possess. This diamond snuff-box was presented to me by the stout old Blücher himself, in remembrance of service I was able to perform at Waterloo. Not that I was a whit worthier of it than the brave fellows under my command—understand that!"

How the diamonds glistened and gleamed as the box was

passed from hand to hand! As if the thickest cluster of stars you ever saw, could shine out in the midst of a yellow sunset sky, and the colors of the rainbow could twinkle through them at the same time! It was superb, but then that was nothing compared to the glory of receiving it from Blücher!

Then there was more wine and story-telling, and at last some asked to look at the snuff-box again.

"Has any one the snuff-box at present?" asked his lordship, rather anxiously, for as he turned to reach it no snuff-box was to be seen.

No one said "yes," for everyone was sure he had passed it to his neighbor, and they searched up and down the table with consternation in their faces, for the snuff-box could not have disappeared without hands, but to say so was to touch the honor of gentlemen and soldiers.

At last one of the most famous officers rose from his seat:

"My lord, he said, "a very unlucky accident must have occurred here. Some one of us must have slipped the box into his pocket unconsciously, mistaking it for his own. I will take the lead in searching mine, if the rest of the company will follow!"

"Agreed!" said the rest, and each guest in turn went to the bottom of one pocket after another, but still no snuff-box, and the distress of the company increased. The old soldier's turn came last, and with it came the surprise. With burning cheeks and arms folded closely across his breast he stood up and confronted the company like a stag at bay.

"No!" he exclaimed, "no one shall search my pockets! Would you doubt the honor of a soldier?"

"But we have all done so," said the rest, "and every one knows it is the merest accident at the most." But the old soldier only held his arms the tighter, while the color grew deeper in

his face. In his perplexity his lordship thought of another expedient.

"We will try another way, gentlemen," he said, "I will order a basket of bran to be brought, and propose that each one in turn shall thrust his hand into the bran. No one shall look on, and if we find the box at last, no one can guess whose hand placed it there."

It was quickly done, and hand after hand was thrust in, until at last came the old soldier's turn once more. But he was nowhere to be seen.

Then, at last the indignation of the company broke forth.

"A soldier, and a hero of Waterloo, and willing to be a thief!" and with their distress about the affair, and his lordship's grief at his loss, the evening was entirely spoiled.

Meantime the old soldier, with his faithful cloak wrapped closely round him once more, was fighting his way through the sharp winds and over the moors again. But a battle against something a thousand times sharper and colder was going on in his breast.

"A thief!" he was saying over and over to himself, "me, who fought close to the side of the 'Iron Duke'! And yet, can I look one of them in the face and tell him he lies?"

The walk that had been gone over so merrily was a terrible one to retrace, and when the cottage was reached, instead of the pride and good luck the poor invalids had been watching for, a gloom deadlier than the fever followed him in. He sat in the doorway as he used, but sometimes he hung his head on his breast, and sometimes started up and walked proudly about, crying—

"Peggy! I say no one shall call me a thief! I am a soldier of the Iron Duke!"

But they did call him a thief, though, for a very strange

thing, after his lordship had sorrowfully ordered the cottage and little garden spot to be searched no box was found, and the gloom and the mystery grew deeper together.

Good nursing could not balance against trouble like this; the beautiful daughters faded and died, the house was too gloomy to stay inside, and if he escaped to the door, he had to hear the passers say—

"There sits the soldier who stole the Blücher diamonds from his host!"

And as if this was not enough, one day the sound of hoofs was heard again, and a rider in uniform clattered up to the door saying:

"Comrade, I am sent to tell you that your pension is stopped! His Majesty cannot count a thief any longer a soldier of his!"

After this the old soldier hardly held up his head at all, and his hair, that had kept black as a coal all these years, turned white as the moors when the winter snows lay on them.

"Though that is all the same, Peggy," he used to say, "for it is winter all the year round with me! If I could only die as the old year does! That would be the thing!"

But long and merciless as the winter is, spring does come at last, if we can but live and fight our way through the storms and cold.

One night a cry of fire roused all the country-side. All but the old soldier. He heard them say the castle was burning, but what was that to him? Nothing could burn away the remembrance that he had once been called a thief within its walls! But the next morning he heard a step—not a horse's hoof this time, but a strong man walking hastily towards him.

"Where is the veteran of Waterloo?" asked his lordship's

voice, and when the old soldier stepped forward, he threw his arms about his neck with tears and sobs.

"Comrade," he said, "come up to the castle! The snuff-box is found, and I want you to stand in the very room where it was lost while I tell everyone what a great and sorrowful wrong a brave and honest soldier has suffered at my hands!"

It did not take many words to explain. In the first alarm of fire the butler had rushed to the plate-closet to save the silver.

"Those goblets from the high shelf! Quick!" he said, to the footman who was helping him, and with the haste about the goblets something else came tumbling down.

"The lost diamond snuff-box!" cried the butler. "That stupid fellow I dismissed the day it disappeared, must have put it there and forgotten all about it!"

The fire was soon extinguished, but not a wink of sleep could his lordship get until he could make reparation for the pitiful mistake about the box; and once more the old soldier made his way across the moors, even the wooden leg stepping proudly as he went along, though now and then, as the old feeling came over him, his white head would droop for a moment again.

The servants stood aside respectfully as he entered the castle, and they and the other guests of that unlucky day gathered round him while his lordship told them how the box had been found and how he could not rest until forgiven by the brave hero he had so unjustly suspected of wrong.

"And now," said the company, "will you not tell us one thing more? Why did you refuse to empty your pockets, as all the rest were willing to do?"

"Because," said the old soldier sorrowfully, "because I *was* a thief, and I could not bear that anyone should discover it! All whom I loved best in the world were lying sick at home,

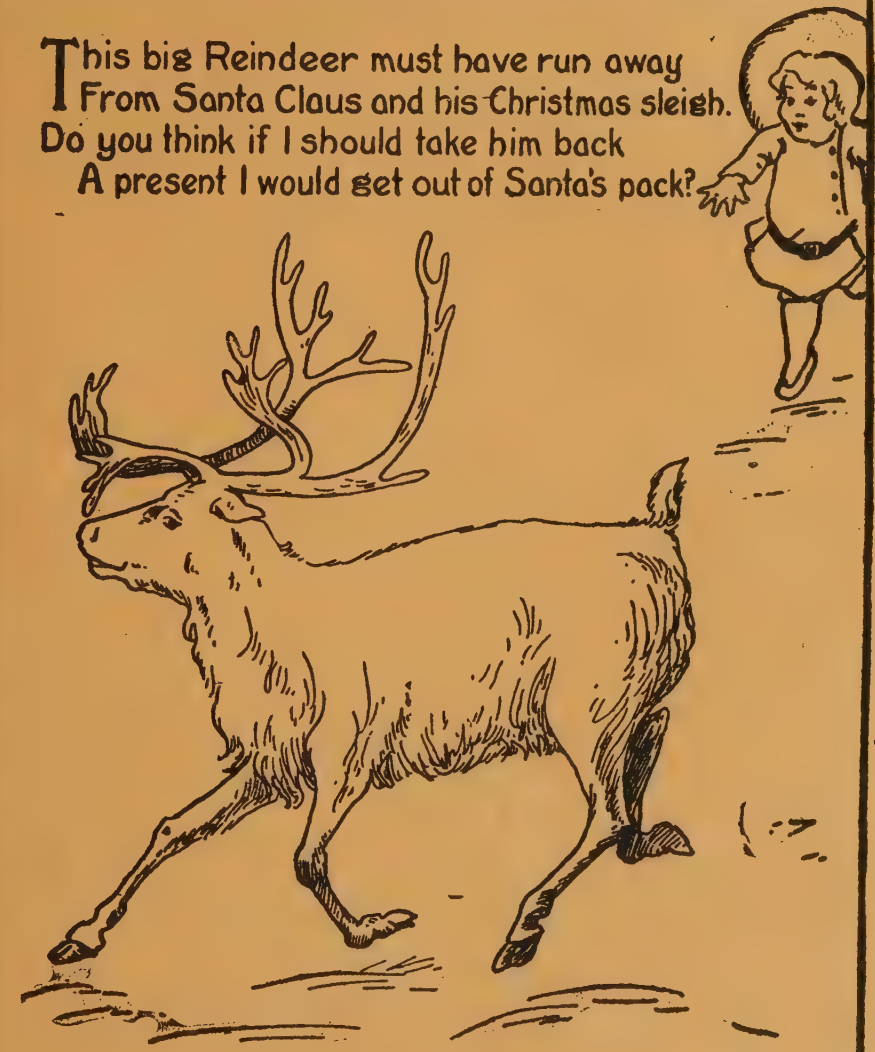
starving for want of the delicacies I could not provide, and I felt as if my heart would break to see my plate heaped with luxuries while they had not so much as a taste! I thought a mouthful of what I did not need might save them, and when no one was looking I slipped some choice bits from my plate between two pieces of bread and made way with them into my pocket. I could not let them be discovered for a soldier is too proud to beg, but oh, my lord, he can bear being called a thief all his life better than he can dine sumptuously while there is only black bread at home for the sick and weak whom he loves!"

Tears came streaming from the old soldier's listeners by this time, and each vied with the other in heaping honors and gifts in place of the disgrace suffered so long; but all that was powerless to make up for the past.

Two good lessons may be learned from the story: Never believe any one guilty who is not really proved to be so. Never let false shame keep you from confessing the truth, whether trifling or of importance.

What are the children doing today,
Down on the nursery floor,
That baby laughter and crows of delight
Float through the open door?
Watching Don's top
spinning around,
Making that queer little
whirring sound.

This big Reindeer must have run away
From Santa Claus and his Christmas sleigh.
Do you think if I should take him back
A present I would get out of Santa's pack?



THE AMERICAN FLAG.

WHEN freedom from her mountain height
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there.
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then from his mansion in the sun,
She called her eagle bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land.

Majestic monarch of the cloud,
Who rears't aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest-trumpings loud,
And see the lightning-lances driven,
When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven—
Child of the sun! to thee is given
To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory!

Flag of the brave! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high,

When speaks the signal trumpet tone,
And the long line comes gleaming on.
Ere yet the life-blood warm and wet
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier's eyes shall brightly turn
To where thy sky-born glories burn;
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance.
And when the cannon's mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle shroud,
And gory sabers rise and fall
Like darts of flame on midnight's pall,
Then shall thy meteor glances glow,
And cowering foes shall sink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death.

Flag of the seas! On ocean wave
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frightened waves rush wildly back
Before the broadside's reeling rack—
Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

Flag of the free heart's hope and home,
By angel hands to valor given;
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.

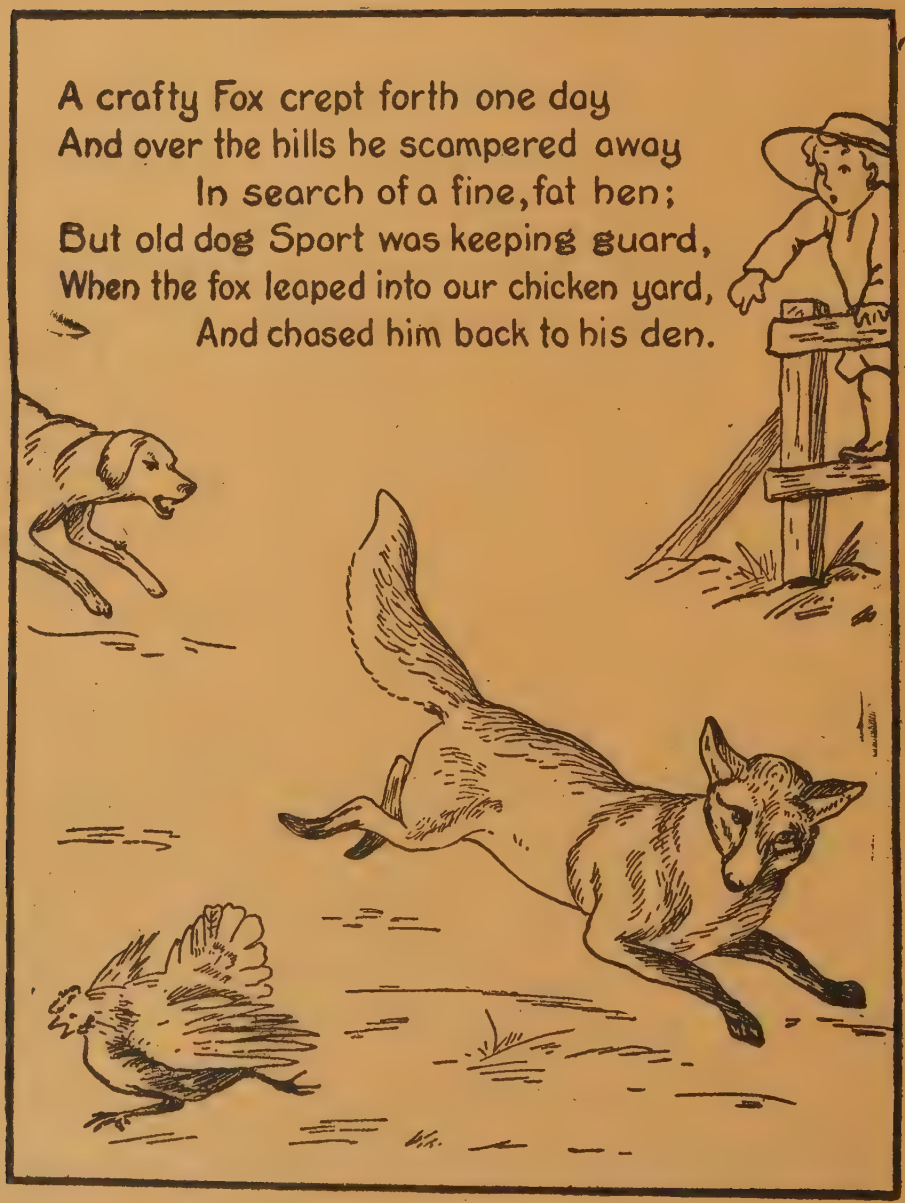
THE AMERICAN FLAG.

Forever float that standard sheet!
  Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With freedom's soil beneath our feet,
  And freedom's banner streaming o'er us?

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE.

We will swing the rope for Baby dear,
So jump, jump, jump!
That you will trip her up I fear,
But jump, jump, jump!
Swing it easy and low,
Steady and slow,
Or down the dear tot will go.

A crafty Fox crept forth one day
And over the hills he scampered away
In search of a fine, fat hen;
But old dog Sport was keeping guard,
When the fox leaped into our chicken yard,
And chased him back to his den.



AUNT POLLY SHEDD'S BRIGADE.

"SOMETHING about the Battle of Hampden?" Grandma took off her spectacles and wiped them reflectively. "It seems to me already I have told you everything worth telling; but there!" in a sudden burst of recollection, "did I ever tell you about Aunt Polly Shedd's Brigade? That was quite an affair to those of us that belonged to it!"

"Oh, no! do tell us about it!" called out the three childish voices in chorus; and grandma only waited to knit by the seam needle.

"I've told you all about it so many times that I don't need to describe again that dreadful morning when the British man-of-war came up the river and, dropping her anchor just opposite our little village of Hampden, sent troops ashore to take possession of the place in the King's name. So what I am going to tell you now is how, and where, we youngsters spent the three days that the British occupied our houses. I was about twelve years old at the time. I remember that it was just as we were getting up from the breakfast-table that one of our neighbors, Sol Grant, old General Grant's youngest son, rushed in without knocking, his face as white as a sheet, and his cap on hind-side before, and called out hurriedly:

" 'Mr. Swett, if you love your family, for God's sake find a place of safety for 'em! The British are coming ashore—three boat-loads of 'em, armed to the teeth—and they won't spare man, woman nor child!

"Mother's face grew very pale, but she stepped quietly around, with her baby on her arm, close to where father was standing, and laid one hand on his arm, while she said, in a firm, clear voice:

"'*My* place is with you, Benjamin, but we must think of some place of safety for the children. Where can they go?'

"Sol was just rushing out of the door as unceremoniously as he had rushed in, but he stopped when he heard her ask that, long enough to say:

"'I forgot to tell you that Aunt Polly Shedd will take all the children put in her charge out to Old Gubtil's; that's so out of the way they won't be disturbed, 'specially as the old man's a tory himself.'

"Mother kissed us all round, with a smile on her face that couldn't quite hide the tears with which her dear eyes were filled, and as she hastily bundled us in whatever garment came to hand, she bade us be good children, and make Aunt Polly and the Gubtils as little trouble as possible. Then we followed father out-of-doors and into the school-house yard where a score or more of children were already gathered—still as mice for intense terror. Aunt Polly, in her big green calash, and a pillow-case of valuables under one arm, was bustling to and fro, speaking an encouraging or admonitory word, as the case might be, and wearing upon her pinched, freckled little face such a reassuring smile that I soon felt my own courage rise and, dashing back the tears that had filled my eyes a moment before, I busied myself in pinning little Sally's blanket more closely about her neck and setting the faded sunbonnet upon the tangled curls that had not yet had their customary morning's dressing.

"'Come, children,' called out Aunt Polly cheerily, 'you're all here now, and we'll start right off. I'll go ahead, an' all you little ones had best keep close to me; the bigger ones can come along behind.'

"Obedient to her order we started, following her steps across the road by the beeches, and up by the grocery store where a crowd of excited men were congregated, talking loudly with

wild gesticulations, while farther down, toward the shore, we could catch glimpses, through the thick morning fog, of the blue uniforms of our militia company that had been summoned in hot haste to defend the town. As we filed past, I remember I heard one of the men on the grocery steps speak:

"'I tell you they won't leave one stone on another if they get possession of the town, and they'll impress all the able-bodied men and all the big boys into the King's service besides.'

"A cold shiver ran over me and I caught so hard at little Sally's hand that the child cried out with pain, and Aunt Polly said anxiously:

"'Hurry up, dears! 'tain't much more'n a mile out to Gubtil's, and you'll have a good nice chance to rest after we get there.'

"Just then the martial music of a fife and drum announced the landing of the enemy's troops, and I tell you it quickened the lagging footsteps of even the youngest child into a run, and we just flew, helter-skelter, over the rough, little-used road that led to the Gubtil farm. Aunt Polly's gentle tones were unheeded. All she could do was to carry the weakest in her arms over all the worst places, with a word of cheer, now and then, to some child who was not too much frightened to heed it.

"What a haven of safety the low, unpainted old farmhouse looked to us, as we rushed, pell-mell, into the dooryard, never noticing, in our own relief, the ungracious scowl with which the master and mistress of the house regarded our advent.

"Aunt Polly soon explained matters, taking care to assure the inhospitable pair that our parents would amply recompense them for the trouble and expense we must, of course, be to them.

"The farmer held a whispered consultation with his wife, and I remember well his harsh, loud tones as he came back to aunt Polly:

"'They'll *have* to stay, I s'pose; there don't seem no help for it now. There's pertaters in the cellar, an' they can roast an' eat what they want. I'll give 'em salt an' what milk an' brown bread they want, an' that's what they'll have to live on for the present. As for housin' 'em, the boys can sleep on the hay in the barn, an' the girls can camp down on rugs an' comforters on the kitchen floor. That's the best I can do, an' if they ain't satisfied they can go furder.'

"I remember just how he looked down at the troubled, childish faces upturned to his own, as if half hoping we might conclude to wander yet farther away from our imperilled homes; but Aunt Polly hastened to answer:

"'Oh, we'll get along nicely with milk for the little ones, and potatoes and salt for the big boys and girls, and we won't trouble you any more nor any longer than we can help, Mr. Gubtil.'

"She stood upon the door-stone beside him as she spoke, a little, bent, slightly deformed figure, with a face shrivelled and faded like a winter-russet apple in spring-time, and a dress patched and darned till one scarcely could tell what the original was like, in a striking contrast to the tall, broad-shouldered, hale old man, whose iron frame had defied the storms of more than seventy winters; but I remember how he seemed to me a mere pigmy by the side of the generous, large-hearted woman whose tones and gestures had a protectiveness, a strength born of love and pity, that reassured us trembling little fugitives in spite of our ungracious reception. We felt that Aunt Polly would take care of us, let what would come.

"The hours dragged slowly away. Aunt Polly told us that the distant firing meant that our men had not retreated without an effort to defend the village. When this firing ceased, we began to watch and hope that some message would come from

our fathers and mothers. But none came. We wondered among our little selves if they all had been put to death by the British, and even the oldest among us shed some dreary tears.

"Dan Parsons, who was the biggest boy among us and of an adventurous turn, went in the gathering twilight gloom down as near the village as he dared. He came shivering back to us with such tales of vague horror that our very hearts stopped beating while we listened.

" 'I crep' along under the shadder of the alders and blackberry bushes,' he began, "til I got close ter De'con Milleses house. 'Twas as still as death 'round there, but jest as I turned the corner by the barn I see somethin' gray a-flappin' and a-flutterin' jest inside the barn door. I stopped, kind o' wonderin' what it could be, when all at once I thought I should 'a' dropped, for it came over me like a flash that it might be'—

" 'What, what, Dan?' cried a score of frightened voices; and Dan replied solemnly:

" '*The old deacon's skulp!*'

" 'Oh dear! oh dear!' sobbed the terrified chorus.

"Aunt Polly could do nothing with us; and little Dolly Miles, the deacon's granddaughter, burst into a series of wild lamentations that called Farmer Gubtil to the door to know the cause of the commotion.

" 'What's all this hullabaloo about?' he asked crossly; and when he had heard the story he seized Dan and shook him till his teeth chattered.

" 'What do you mean by tellin' such stuff an' scarin' these young ones ter death?' he demanded.

"Dan wriggled himself from his grasp and looked sulkily defiant:

" 'I didn't say *'twas* that,' he muttered. 'I said it *might* be, an' p'r'aps 'twas; or it *might* 'a' been the deacon's old mare

switchin' 'er tail ter keep off the flies. I'm sure *I* don't know which 'twas. But girls are always a-squealin' at nothin'.'

"And with this parting fling at us tearful ones, Dan turned in the direction of the barn; but I was too anxious to hear from father and mother to let him go without a word more. 'Dan,' I whispered with my hand on his arm, 'did you see or hear anything of *our* folks?'

"'No!' was the rather grump reply; 'after what I saw at the deacon's I didn't want ter ventur' furder, but from there I could see 'em lightin' fires in the village, an' I don't doubt by this time that most o' the houses is in flames.'

"With this comforting assurance Dan went off to his bed upon the haymow, and I crept back into the house and laid my tired head down upon Aunt Polly's motherly lap, where, between my sobs, I managed to tell what Dan had told me.

Aunt Polly laid a caressing hand upon my hair: 'La, child,' said she soothingly, 'don't you worry yourself a bit over Dan Parson's stories. That boy was *born* to tell stories. The Britishers are bad enough, but they ain't heathen savages, an' if the town has surrendered, as I calc'late it has, the settlers will be treated like prisoners o' war. There won't be no sculpin' nor burnin' o' houses—no, dear. And now,' giving me a little reassuring pat, 'you're all tired out, an' ought ter be asleep. I'll make up a bed on this rug with a cushion under your head, an' my big plaid shawl over you, an' you'll sleep jest as sound as if you was ter home in your own trundle-bed.'

"Little Sally shared my rug and shawl, and Aunt Polly, gently refusing the ungracious civility of the old couple, who had offered her the use of their spare bedroom, after seeing every little, tired form made as comfortable as possible with quilts and blankets from the farmwife's stores, laid herself down upon the floor beside us, after commending herself and us to the God

she loved and trusted, raised her head and spoke to us once more in her sweet, hopeful, quavering old tones:

" 'Good night, dears! Go to sleep and don't be a bit afraid. I shouldn't wonder if your folks come for you in the mornin'.'

"What comfort there was in her words! And even the very little ones, who had never been away from their mothers a night before in their lives, stopped their low sobbing and nestled down to sleep, sure that God and Aunt Polly would let no harm come to them.

"The next day passed slowly and anxiously for us all. From a stray traveller Aunt Polly learned that the village was still in the hands of the British and—what was no little comfort to us - -that no violence had been done to the place or its inhabitants. Some of the older boys were for venturing to return, but Aunt Polly held them back with her prudent arguments. If their parents had considered it safe for them to come home they would have sent for them. The British, she said, had been known to impress boys, as well as men, into service, and the wisest way was to keep out of their sight.

"The gentle, motherly advice prevailed, and even Dan Parsons contented himself with climbing the tallest trees in the vicinity, from which he could see the chimneys of several of the nearest houses. From these pinnacles he would call out to us at intervals:

" 'The smoke comin' out o' Deacon Mileses chimly has a queer look, somethin' like burnin' feathers I shouldn't wonder a mite if them Britishers was burnin' up his furnitoor! Sam Kelly's folks hain't had a spark o' fire in their fireplace to-day. Poor critters! Mebbe there ain't nobody left ter want one.'

"With these dismal surmises, Dan managed to keep our forlorn little flock as uncomfortable as even he could wish; and as the second night drew on, I suppose the homesickness of the

smaller ones must have been pitiful to see. Aunt Polly patted and cuddled the forlorn little things to the best of her ability, but it was past midnight before the last weary, sobbing baby was fairly asleep, while all night long one or another would start up terrified from some frightful dream, to be soothed into quiet by the patient motherly tenderness of their wakeful protector.

"Next morning the brow of the farmer wore an ominous frown, and his wife, as she distributed to each the scant measure of brown bread and milk remarked, grudgingly, that she should think 'twas 'bout time that her house was cleared of a crowd o' hungry, squallin' young ones; and then Mr. Gubtil took out his account-book and wrote down the name of each child, with an estimate of the amount of bread, milk and potatoes consumed by each. He did this with the audible remark that 'if folks thought he was a-feedin' an' a-housin' their young ones for nothin' they'd find themselves mightily mistaken.'

"The third morning dragged slowly away. Dinner was over and still no message for us forlorn little ones. At last Aunt Polly slowly arose from her seat upon the doorstep, with the light of a strong, courageous resolve on her little face.

"'Children!' she called loudly, and after we had gathered at her call, she spoke to us with an encouraging smile:

"'I've made up my mind that 'twon't be best for us to stay here another night. We're in the way, and the little ones would be better off at home with their mothers. We know that the fightin' is all over, and I don't believe the English soldiers'll be bad enough to hurt a lot o' little helpless children, 'specially if they're under a flag o' truce.'

"Here she drew a handkerchif from her pocket. This she fastened carefully to a stick. Then putting it into the hands of my brother Ben, a well-grown lad of twelve, she went on with her directions:

"'We'll form in procession, just as we came, and you, Benjie, may march at the head with this white flag a-wavin' to let them know that we come in peace. I'll follow next with the biggest boys, and the girls, with the little ones, must keep behind where it's safest.'

"Perhaps it was the contagion of Aunt Polly's cheerful courage, but more likely it was the blessed hope of seeing home and father and mother again, that made the little folks so prompt to obey her directions. We formed ourselves in line in less time than it takes to tell about it; we elder girls took charge of the wee ones who were so rejoiced to leave the inhospitable roof of the Gubtils' that they forgot all their fears of the terrible English, and trotted along as blithely over the deserted road as if not a fear had ever terrified their childish hearts, and as if English soldiers were still simply those far-off monsters that had served as bugbears to frighten them now and then into obedience to maternal authority.

"The Gubtils watched us off without a word of encouragement or friendliness. Aunt Polly walked close behind the flag-bearer with a firm step, but I could see that she was very pale, and when we came to descend the little hill that led into the village, and when just at its foot, where then stood the grocery of old Penn Parker, we caught a glimpse of the scarlet uniforms of several soldiers loafing about—then even we children could see that her steps faltered; and I remember I thought she was fearful of some violence.

"But the next moment she was walking steadily along again as if no thought of danger or retreat had ever entered her mind; and as we came opposite the grocery and a tall man in an officer's uniform strolled out toward us with a curious, questioning look upon his handsome face, she gave the word of command to her little brigade in a voice as clear as a bell:

"'Halt, children!'

"We all stood still as mice, eying the stranger with looks in which fear and admiration were probably curiously blended, while Aunt Polly, taking the white flag from her color-bearer, advanced with a firm front to meet the foe who now, reinforced by several men, stood beside the way, evidently wondering what this queer parade was about.

"'Sir!' and Aunt Polly's voice trembled perceptibly but she waved the white flag manfully under his very nose, 'sir, I demand a safe passage for these innocent children to their different homes.'

"The officer stared, and his mouth twitched mischievously as if he had hard work to keep from laughing outright. But he was a gentleman; and when he spoke, he spoke like one.

"'My good woman,' he said kindly, 'these children are nothing to me. If you wish permission for them to go to their own homes you are welcome to it, though in what way the matter concerns me I must confess I am at a loss to imagine."

Then, and not till then, Aunt Polly broke down and sobbed aloud:

"'Run, children,' she cried as soon as she could speak; 'go home just as fast as you can scud; an' tell your folks,' she added with a gust of gratitude, 'that there's worse folks in the world than an Englishman.'

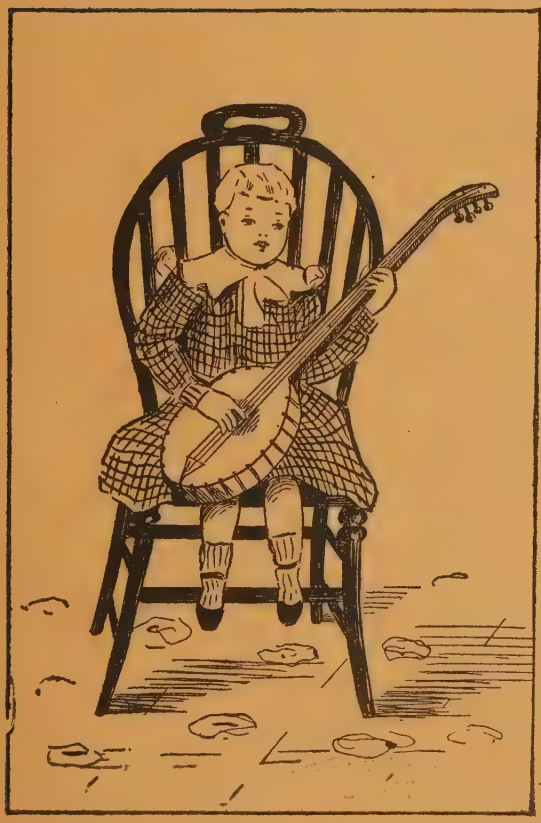
"You may be sure that we waited for no further urging; and as we flew, rather than ran, in the direction of our different homes, I heard the irrepressible burst of laughter with which the officer and his men received the grateful spinster's compliment which, to the day of her death, she loved to repeat whenever she told the thrilling story of her adventure with the English officer, 'when Hampden was took by the British in 1814;' always concluding with this candid admission:

"'An' really, now, if he'd 'a' been anybody but an Englishman, an' an inimy, I should 'a' said that I never sot eyes on a better-built, more mannerly man, in all my born days.'"

Heigho! Baby Mine!
Now where are you creeping,
With such a rapid pace
across the nursery floor?
Only out to Mamma
who'll give you royal greeting,
With coddling and petting
and kisses
galore.

CORINNE'S MUSICALE.

INSIDE of me says I am naughty,
But truly, I know I am not;
For if Brother Joe could see me
Right in this very same spot,



He'd let me do just what I'm doing,
I'm very sure; that is, perhaps.
Oh dear! however do big folks
Hold t h i s t h i n g straight in their laps?

It slips, an' it slips, an' it slips,
You n a u g h t y old Banjo, oh dear!
Is he coming? then what will he do
To find me sitting up here!
Ho, ho! 'twas a mouse —how silly
An' frightened I've actually been;
For he'd say, "If you hold it quite still,
You may take it, I'm willing, Corinne!"

I know: so now I'll begin it;
How does he go "*tum-ty tum ting*,"
An' make such beautiful tunes,
Too lovely for anything?
I ain't a bit 'fraid they may hear,
—The house-people 'way off below—
Me playing in Brother Joe's room,
Still I better be careful, you know.

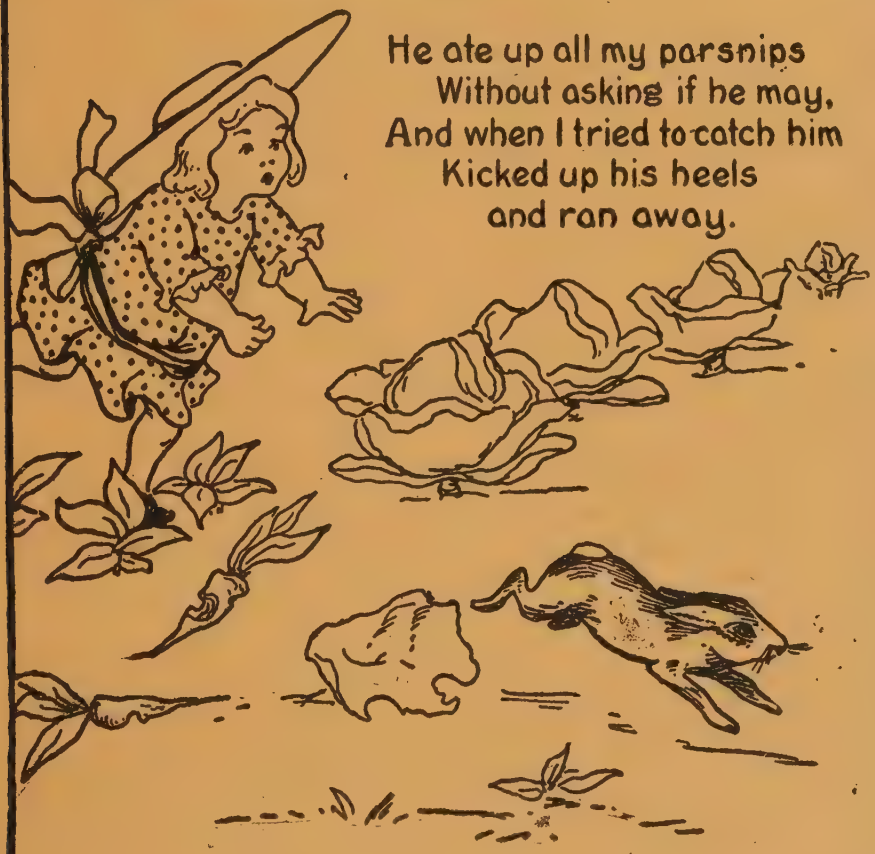
If they didn't say 'twas amusing,
I sh'd think 'twas stupid to play,
To tug at such tiresome strings
An' make them come over this way;
But it must be delightful. I'll pull
A very fine tune at first;
Now, "*tum-ty ting tw-a-n-g!*"
It sounds as if something had burst!

That string must 'a' truly been cracked,
Don't you s'pose? or moth-eaten, p'raps;
'Tisn't pleasant to practice, I'm sure,
But forlorn, when anything flaps.
So I guess I have finished; hark, hark!
He really *is* coming—Oh my!
Now, Banjo, I know mamma wants me,
An' so I must bid you good-by!

MARGARET SIDNEY.

Mr. Bunny was a rabbit,
Mr. Bunny was a thief!
He hopped into my garden
And stole a cabbage leaf.

He ate up all my parsnips
Without asking if he may,
And when I tried to catch him
Kicked up his heels
and ran away.



BARBARA FRIETCHIE.

UP from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach-tree fruited deep,

Fair as a garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall,
When Lee marched over the mountain-wall—

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town—

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down:

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat, left and right,
He glanced: the old flag met his sight.

"Halt"—the dust-brown ranks stood fast,
"Fire!"—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick as it fell from the broken staff,
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf;

She leaned far out on the window sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

"Shoot if you must this old gray head,—
But spare your country's flag," she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word.

"Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet.

All day long that free flag tossed
Over the heads of the rebel host;

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps, sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her!—and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

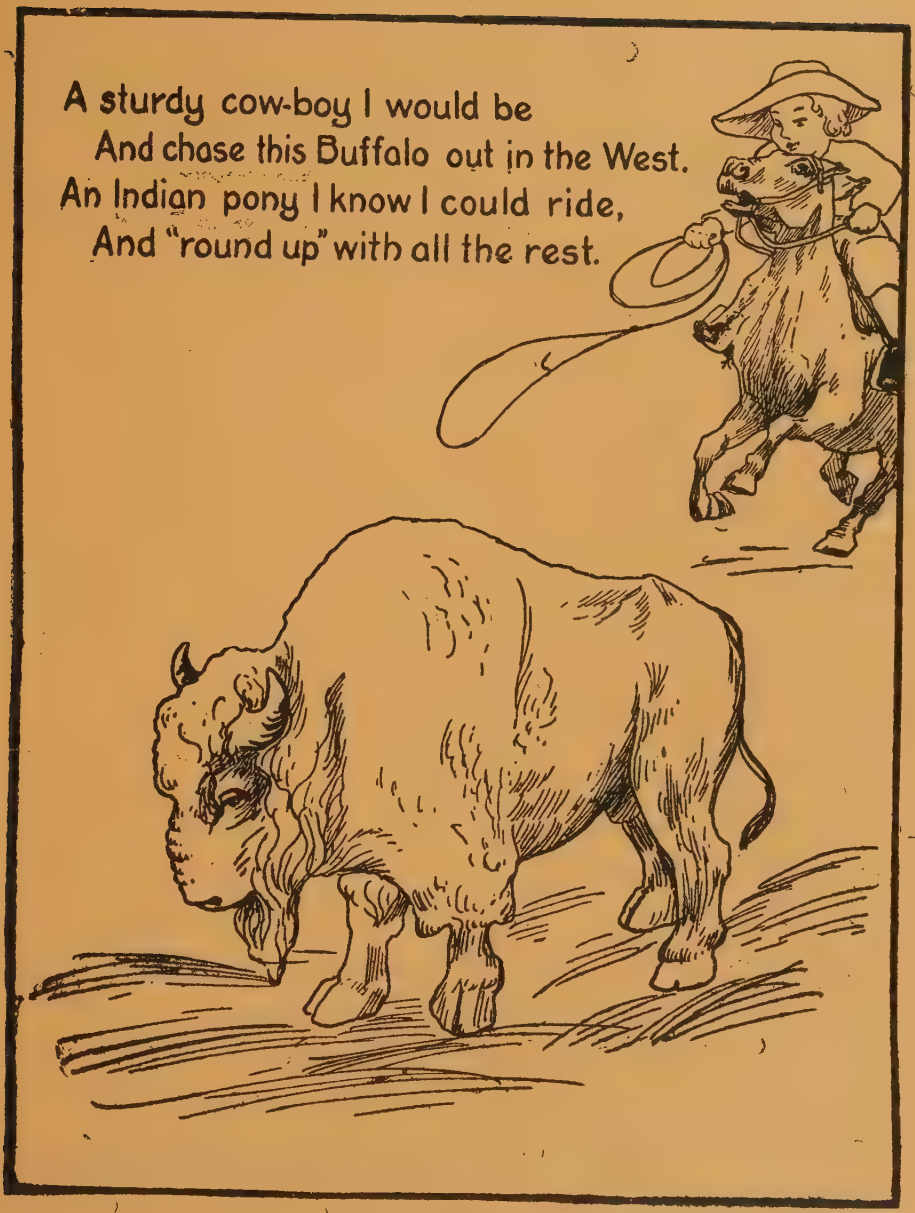
Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union wave!

Peace, and order, and beauty, draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below at Frederick town!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

A sturdy cow-boy I would be
And chase this Buffalo out in the West.
An Indian pony I know I could ride,
And "round up" with all the rest.



SHERIDAN'S RIDE.

(Used by special arrangement with J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, publisher of Mr. Read's Poems.)

UP from the South at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble and rumble and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wilder still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar,
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good, broad highway leading down;
And there through the flash of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night,
Was seen to pass as with eagle's flight—
As if he knew the terrible need,
He stretched away with the utmost speed;
Hills rose and fell—but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from these swift hoofs, thundering South,
The dust, like the smoke from the cannon's mouth,

Or the trail of a comet sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster;
The heart of the steed and the heart of the master,
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

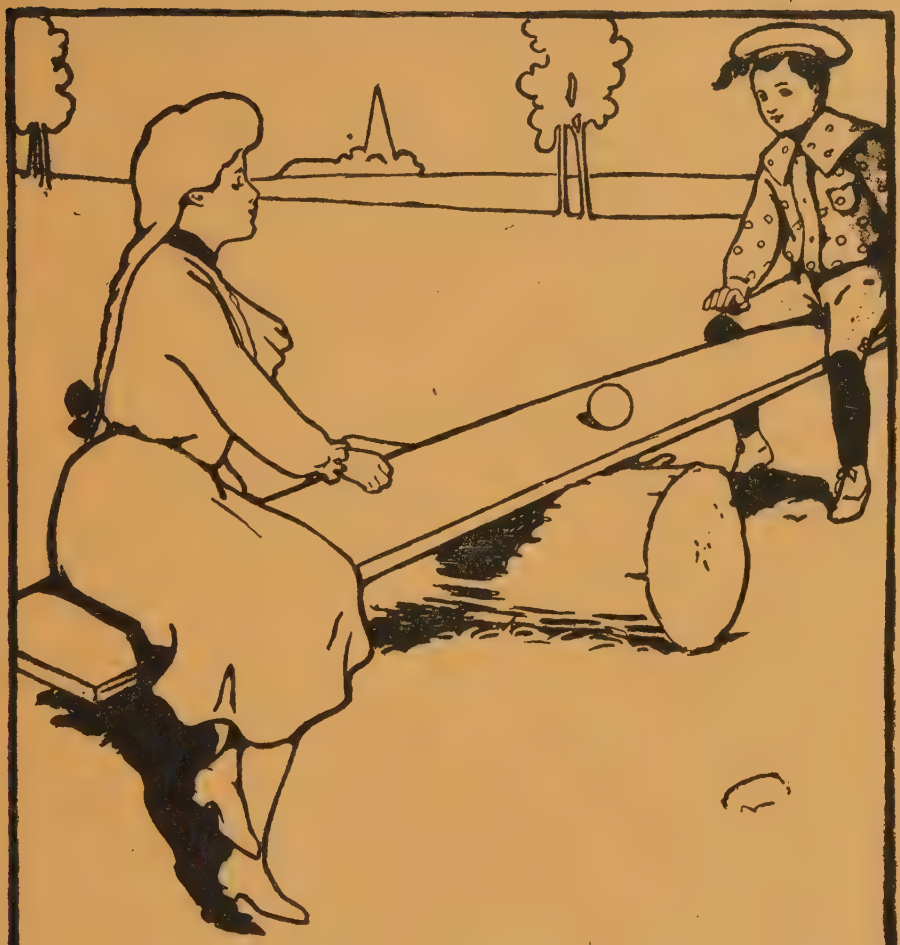
Under his spurning feet the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed;
And the landscape sped away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind.
And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,
Swept on with his wild eyes full of fire,
But lo! he is nearing his heart's desire—
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the General saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops;
What was done—what to do—a glance told him both,
And striking his spurs with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line 'mid a storm of huzzahs,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause.
With foam and with dust the black charger was gray,
By the flash of his eye, and his red nostrils' play,
He seemed to the whole great army to say,
"I have brought you Sheridan all the way
From Winchester down to save the day!"

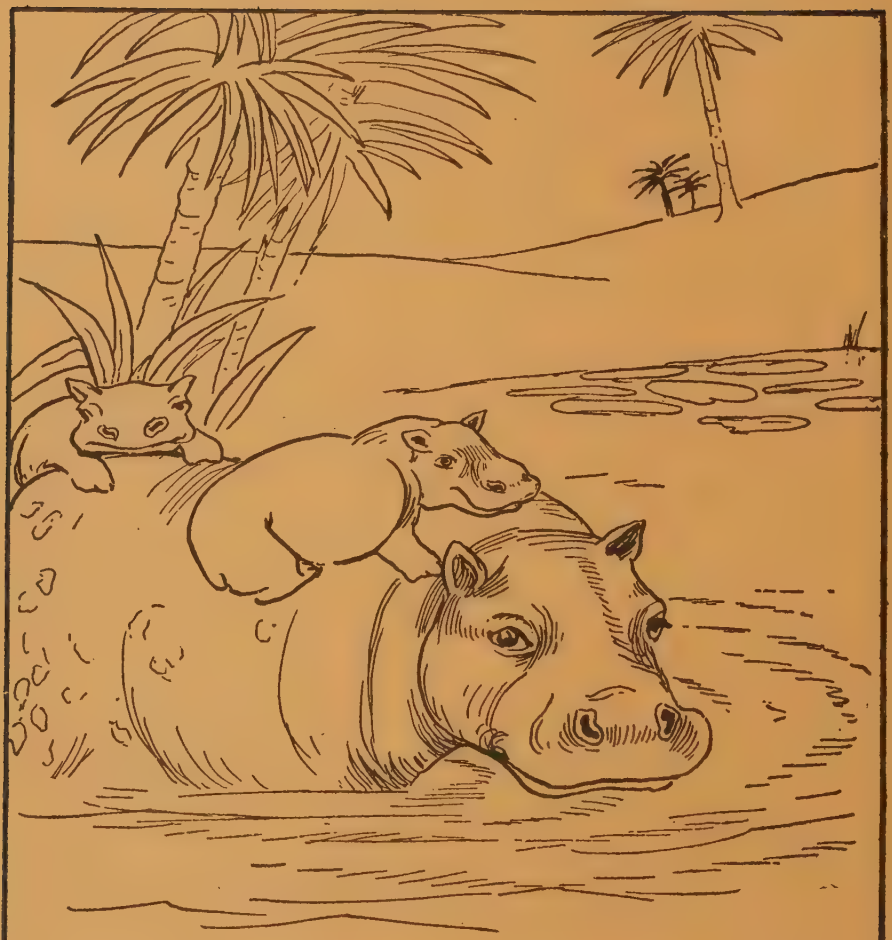
Hurrah, hurrah for Sheridan!
Hurrah, hurrah for horse and man!

And when their statues are placed on high
Under the dome of the Union sky—
The American soldiers' Temple of Fame—
There with the glorious General's name
Be it said in letters both bold and bright:
"Here is the steed that saved the day
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester—twenty miles away!"

T. B. READ.



See-saw, Margery Daw,
Jenny shall have a new master,
She shall have but a penny a day,
Because she can't work any faster.



An old Hippopotamus lived on the Nile,
If she hasn't gone away, she's been there quite a while.
She gives all her children a ride on her back,
Broad enough to accommodate the whole scrambling pack.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

BETWEEN the dark and daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamp-light,
Descending the broad hall-stair,
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence;
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me,
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses;
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old Mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all?

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down in the dungeon,
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there I will keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

I will dig me a garden and plant it with seeds,
I will hoe and water it and keep down the weeds;
Then perhaps some of these bright summer days,
To Mamma I can carry big boquets.

CARYL'S PLUM.

"He put in his thumb
And pulled out a plum."

SO sang Caryl over the stairs.

"Now if *he* pulled out a plum, why shouldn't *she?*" she said to herself, halting a bit by the landing window. "And a good big plum too—nice and juicy. O Aunt Sylvia, Aunt Sylvia!"

She fairly hugged herself in glee, then drew one long breath and dashed on to her own poor little room.

"Oh, you here, Viny?" she exclamed in surprise as she flung open the door.

A small figure rose to a perpendicular position in front of the old bureau, while a shoving-to of the under drawer proclaimed some attention having been paid to the pretty laces, ribbons, and various other adornments packed away for safe keeping.

Caryl remembered leaving the key in the drawer after taking out a bit of lavender ribbon the night before for Aunt Sylvia's cap.

"What have you been doing?" she asked sharply; and taking hold of the small wiry shoulder, she looked down into a little black face whose eyes were staring solemnly into the farthest corner of the room.

"Ben doin'?" repeated Viny, scared almost to death inwardly, but preserving a cool exterior. "Nothin', only shettin' the draw'; plaguey thing wouldn't stay put. Tore my dress," she added mumblingly to fill out the pause.

"Where?" said Caryl, looking sharply at her.

"Dar," said Viny, with a violent twist, so that she could

compass the back breadths of her blue gingham frock, and she pointed abruptly to a cat-a-cornered rent.

"Oh, no, you didn't," contradicted Caryl, looking her through and through, and giving her a small shake, "tear that either; I heard Maum Patty scold you yesterday for letting Jip bite it and snip out a piece."

"Well, somefin tore," said Viny. "I donno whar 'tis, but it's somewhars. A mighty smart tare, too, Miss Ca."

"I'll lock, and lock, and lock," declared the young girl, now down on her knees before her precious drawer, "before I run the chance of your rummaging fingers getting here again. Now then, Viny!"

"Yes'm," said the little black girl obsequiously, and rolling her eyes to all quarters; "Oh, yes'm!"

"We are going to move, Viny," said her young mistress, taking the key out of its lock, and turning her back on drawers and contents, to sit on the floor with hands folded in her lap while she watched the effect of her words.

"*Move?*" echoed Viny with a start; "Oh, lawks! whatever's dat, Miss?"

"Why, go to a new place," said Caryl, laughing in spite of herself. "For mercy's sake, child, do take your eyes in! It'll be very fine, Viny, oh, so fine!" she cried enthusiastically.

"An' lib here nebber no mo'?" cried the little black figure in a shrill scream; "wot, an' hev no leaky sink dat keps me a-swashin' and a-swashin', an' no old ruf dat lets in hull buckets full o' water onter de bed, an'—"

"No," said Caryl, interrupting the steady stream of invective against the old house, "everything's to be as new and nice and neat as a pin, Viny—sinks and everything else; you can't begin to think how splendid it's to be!"

"I'm goin' to tell gramma," cried Viny, wholly off her balance, "dis berry same minnit. Lawks! but won't she be tickled to leave the ole shell! Den I'll git my bunnet an' go wid yer, Miss Ca, in tree shakes of a lobster's whisker!"

She scampered in the greatest excitement to the door, when a detaining pull on the end of her long apron, brought her to a full stop.

"You are crazy, child!" exclaimed Caryl, bursting into a laugh and holding her fast. "We can't go this moment, no matter how bad the old house is. Listen, Viny!"

But the small figure flung itself into a heap on the floor so suddenly that she nearly pulled her young mistress with her, while the little black hands clapped themselves over the bead-like eyes, wail after wail of disappointment making the room to ring.

"Will you *stop!*" cried Caryl in perfect despair. "Aunt Sylvia's head will snap with your noise! If you don't stop crying, Viny, you sha'n't go when the rest of us are ready to move, so there, now."

Threats had the power to do what nothing else could. Viny wiped off all the tears with the backs of her grimy little paws, gave two or three concluding sniffs, sat up straight, and was immediately all right for further developments.

"Now then"—Caryl pointed off her sentences briskly on the tips of her rosy fingers—"you must try to help—well, an awful great deal, Viny, yourself, or else it can't be a moving for any single one of us."

Viny's eyes widened fearfully, but she didn't stir.

"If you will take care—mind! *splendid* care of Aunt Sylvia every morning," said Caryl slowly and with extreme *empressment*—"watch and get her everything she wants, not wait for

her to ask for anything, then I can go off down street and make lots and lots of money, Viny. Think of that, lots and lots! Then we can move, and Aunt Sylvia will maybe get well."

Caryl's gray eyes were only a thought less big than those of her small black audience, who presently caught the infectious enthusiasm and emitted several lusty crows.

"Jiminy—oh, I *didn't* say it—I didn't—I didn't! O Jiminy, I didn't—I didn't—O Jimmy, I—"

"Stop saying it, then," exclaimed her young mistress decidedly, and enforcing her words by a vigorous shake.

"Oh, I didn't—I will—O Jiminy! yes, I will!" cried the little black delinquent, the full tide of original sin taking an unfair advantage of her excitement to engulf her. "Oh—er—oh—er-r—"

Caryl came to her rescue by giving her a new idea.

"See how splendid you can be, Viny dear," she said kindly. "You can be such a good little helper, so that part of the new home will be of your getting; for I never could have the chance to earn anything if you didn't take my place and be Aunt Sylvia's nurse."

"I know how," said Viny, perfectly overcome with the greatness thrust upon her; "it's to slip crickets under her feet to put her toes onter. I'll slip 'em all day. An' it's to wipe her specs, an' to say yes, no, an' to—"

"To be good," finished Caryl solemnly; "that comprehends the whole business."

"To be good," repeated the small nurse yet more solemnly, "an' to compren' the whole bus'ness; I will."

"You are a ridiculous child," cried Caryl impatiently; "I don't really suppose you are fit to be trusted, but then, it's the only thing to try."

Viny, having been duly elected to office, considered her honors settled, so she was little disturbed by any opinions that might be held concerning her. Therefore she squatted and wriggled in great delight, grinning at every word that fell from her young mistress' lips.

"You see, Viny," Caryl was saying, beginning on her confidence, "I've got an order to teach the little Grant girls how to paint, and if I can run down there two hours every morning, I'm to have twenty-five dollars, and Madam Grant is going to give it to me in advance; that is, after the first quarter. Think, Viny, *twenty-five* dollars! That's what we want to move with into Heart's Delight!"

CARYL RUN DOWN WITH HER COLOR BOX UNDER HER ARM.

This was the upstairs southwest corner of a little cottage that for a year or more had been the desideratum of the young girl's highest hopes that had to wear themselves out in empty longings, the invalid's scanty exchequer only sufficing for doctor's bills and similar luxuries. They had lived in the old house now for many a twelvemonth, along

with several other broken-down lodgers whose slender means compelled them to call this place "home"—this place where never a bit of sunshine seemed to come; where even the birds hated to stop for a song as they flew merrily over the tree-tops. And no wonder. The trees were scraggy, loppy old things hanging down in dismal sweep over the leaky roof and damp walls. They had to stay—the lodgers, but the birds and the sunshine tossed off the whole responsibility of life in such a gloomy old home, and flitted to gayer quarters. But now, what if Heart's Delight could really be theirs!

"Yer goin' ter tell 'em how to paint dem tings yer daub?" broke in Viny, and snapping off this delightful thought.

"You shouldn't speak so, child," said Caryl with the greatest dignity; "it's very fine work, and you couldn't possibly understand it. It's art, Viny."

"Ho, ho!" laughed the small black figure, nowise impressed and cramming her stumpy fingers up to her mouth to keep the laugh in as she saw her young mistress' displeasure. "It's an awful old dirty muss, an' I wish I could do it," she added under her breath.

"And I shall begin tomorrow," declared Caryl with still greater dignity, and drawing herself to her full height. "Aunt Sylvia says she'll try you. Now you'll be good, won't you?" she added anxiously. "It's only for two hours a day, Viny."

"I'll be good," declared Viny, "'strue's I live an' breeve." Meanwhile the darkest of plans ran riot in her little black head.

"Heart's Delight—Heart's Delight!" sang Caryl's happy voice all that day; and like St. Patrick's poor imprisoned snake, she began to feel that to-morrow would never come.

But hours come and go, and Caryl awoke the next morning, the brightest, cheeriest morning that ever called a happy girl out of bed.

"Aunt Sylvia won't have many more days in that dark little room of hers," she cried to herself, throwing on her clothes rapidly. "Oh, dear, where *are* the pins? I can't bear to wait a minute any more than Viny, when I think of that dear lovely nest, and the bay-window, and all that sunshine. I'll always have it full of flowers, and the bird shall sing all the time, and—and—and—"

The rest was lost in a dash of cold water over the rosy face, and Caryl soon presented herself at her aunt's bedside.

"I'll do well enough while you are gone," said her aunt, smiling up from the pillows into the bright face above hers. "Now you're not to worry about me in the least, for you cannot do justice to yourself if your mind is troubled. Remember, Caryl, and be thorough in your efforts to teach your little pupils."

"And Madam Grant is going to buy some of my panels and little plaques, I almost know," cried Caryl, bustling around for her aunt's long woolen wrapper and her day slippers, "for she told me she should want to see them some time. Then, Auntie—oh, then!"

The young girl in her eagerness climbed upon the old bed to lay her fresh young cheek against the pale thin one. How she longed to put brightness into the poor invalid's life!

"Remember," said Aunt Sylvia lightly, to hide the tears in her voice, "your fortune's to be made. Only be prompt and thorough, and put your whole mind to your work. That is the secret of success."

"I will, Auntie, oh, I *will!*" cried Caryl happily, "and Viny will do well, I guess," she added, the gleeful tones dropping down with an anxious note.

"Viny will prove a capital little nurse, I expect," said Miss Sylvia cheerfully; "now the day won't wait, Caryl, so get your old auntie up."

"My old auntie is just *lovely*," cried the girl, hopping off from the bed, and flying around merrily, well pleased at last when the invalid was in her chair, to see a little faint, pink color stealing up the wan cheek.

"The best cap, Aunt Sylvia—the best cap!" she cried, running for the one with the fresh lavender ribbons.

"What an extravagant puss!" exclaimed Aunt Sylvia, willing to humor the gay little heart, and tapping her cheek as the young girl settled the cap on the lovely gray hair.

"Everything must be best to-day," cried Caryl recklessly. "It's all fresh and new and fine! All the world is made just for us."

Maum Patty saw Caryl run down the dirty little brick path that served for all the lodgers in the old house as a walk to the broken-down gate, with her color-box under her arm, and her little roll of pictures in her hand, and heaved a sigh from her ample bosom.

"Dat chile can't make no fortin' like she's a-tinkin' of, but laws! let her try. Here, yer Viny, yer, be off up to de Missis' room. Scat now! De pore lettle lamb," she mourned, as her hopeful grandchild unwillingly dragged her recreant feet off to her duties, leaving her grandmother to pursue her reflections in peace, "it mos' busts my heart to see her a-workin' an' de Missis keepin' up an' pretendin' she's as fine as a queen. 'Twarn't so in ole Patty's day. Den dar wos plenty—pies and turkeys. Lors, what stumpers! An' hull bar'ls o' flour, an' sugar, an' a creation sight of eberyting in de beyeutiful house, an' now look at dis ole shell!"

Maum Patty tossed her turban in intense scorn at each of the dark soot-begrimed walls of the place called kitchen.

"Missis ud feel more like folks," she said at each disdainful scrutiny, "an' like as not git well, ef we cud cut sticks inter anudder home. Ef de chile only *cud* do it!"

She peered anxiously down the dirty little brick walk again, then fetched a still longer sigh.

"I don't darst to!" she declared in a mighty burst at last. "I don't, cos wot ud keep us all from the pore-'us den. It's every speck I kin do ter keep along of de Miss an' Car'l an' take keer of 'em wi'dout a cent o' pay; I don't darst tech my stockin' bag in de bank."

Maum Patty always spoke of her scanty savings deposited in the neighboring bank, in this way, fondly supposing them in the original condition in which ten years ago, she had taken them there for future shield against sickness and old age.

Meantime the little black nurse had begun her work.

Peering around Miss Sylvia's half-closed door, Viny exclaimed to herself, "Umph! she don't want me; guess she's a'readin' now. I'll git into Miss Ca's room an' try on all her clo'es an' pertend I'm makin' calls, an' peek inter ebery single place whar I kin, an' I'll be a lady, an' dar sha'n't no one scold Viny."

"Viny," called Miss Sylvia's soft voice, hearing a rustle at the door.

"Dat's Jip she's a-talkin' ter, I reckon," said Viny, stealing off on her tiptoes down the hall, and sticking her fingers in her ears that she might hear no more troublesome conscience calls; "I seen him on de rug when I peeked in de crack. Now den—Whoop, says I, *Whoop!*"

She was safe now in Caryl's room, where the first thing she did was to indulge in a series of somersaults over the floor, and also, for variety, over the neat little white bed. These afforded her intense comfort. When she came up bright and shining after this celebration of her independence, she drew herself up with a serious face and proceeded at once to stern business.

"Two hours ain't long," she observed wisely, "an' I mus'

be back some of de time. Jiminy! she's forgot de key again!"

In truth, Caryl in her great excitement of hunting for some pictures packed away in her precious drawer, had forgotten to pocket the key that protected her few treasures.

Ruthlessly, then, they were pulled out and overhauled, while Viny reveled in each new discovery, chattering softly to herself in glee. She tied on all the bright bits of ribbons she could lay her hands on, to the little tiny tails adorning her head. She twisted with great difficulty into a delicate white spenser that Caryl's mother had worn when a girl, saved for its tender reminiscence, and for the soft, fine old lace that would be of use to the young daughter by and by. Viny was nowise disturbed in her enjoyment at certain ominous crackings and creakings that proclaimed the giving way of the delicate material. Arrayed at last to her satisfaction, although the lace did hang down in some shreds where her impatient fingers had clutched it, she whirled and whirled in front of the old-fashioned glass with many grimaces, trying the effect of her new costume.

"I want sumfin to shine," she said at last, tired of this; "jew-*el*lery an' stuns. Le's see ef she's got any."

Now in one corner of Caryl's drawer was a small black box; unfortunately, the lock was broken in childhood, and there had been no money to spare for repairs of anything of that sort, so she had tied it securely with the strongest of twine, and written on the cover in big schoolgirl hand the words, "DON'T ANY ONE DARE TO TOUCH!" Although Viny was unable to decipher the writing in the least, it was fun enough to attack the string, which presently succumbed to the violent onslaught of tooth and nail, and the precious, precious bits of brightness were soon at the mercy of the little black fingers.

Maum Patty was droning away in the kitchen some old Methodist hymns. Viny was dimly conscious of a faint call

from the invalid's room, as she drew out in the utmost delight an old-fashioned brooch with a green centre around which were some little sparkling things.

She couldn't even say "Jiminy!" but simply held the pretty thing which seemed glad of its freedom from solitary confinement, and thus delighted to sparkle more than ever in its resting-place in the little black hand. With trembling fingers she fastened it into the centre of the lace spenser, above her naughty little bosom, hurrying to the glass to do so, and had just taken one look, when a low cry of distress struck upon her ear.

It filled her whole soul with dismay, rooting her like a little frozen thing to the spot. It was Miss Sylvia, she knew.

With one mighty effort she tore herself from the spot, and rushed headlong into the hall. "Oh—oh—*oh!*" came from the invalid's room.

At that Viny wrung her hands and writhed in dire distress.

"She's a-dyin'!" she gasped, her knees knocking together in a lively manner; "I don't darst to look—I don't!—I've killed her!" And the whole flood of remorse sweeping her very soul, she turned and scuttled down the crooked little stairs and into the street.

"A doctor!" was all her thought. She remembered hearing Caryl say he lived in a big brown house that had lots of flowers in the windows. But where upon the face of the earth the house was situated, Viny knew no more than a bird. However, she must get him, so she dashed blindly on, turning the first corner to run headlong into the arms of a portly old lady who was placidly enjoying the fresh air and sunshine at the same time that she displayed her rich street attire.

"Oh, my goodness!" cried the old lady, startled out of all fine speeches by the collision, and jumping in fright to the extreme edge of the curbstone. Then seeing the cause, she cried

in anger, "You miserable, dirty little thing you, you've nearly killed me!"

At the word "killed," Viny began to dance in terror on the sidewalk. "I know it," she cried, "oh, dear, I know it! she's dead, an' grandma 'll beat me."

"And if you don't know any better," cried the old lady, vainly trying to settle her gray puffs as they were before, "than to run into people in this way, I'll have you arrested, I will!"

At this Viny was completely overcome. Her guilty conscience pictured all sorts of punishments; worse, far worse, than "grandma's" judgments, and, falling on her knees, she grasped the old lady's black satin gown and implored for mercy.

The old lady, now her attention was drawn off from her own annoyance, settled her eyes on the brooch half concealed by a fold of the little lace spenser.

"You wicked, bad child!" she exclaimed, seizing her arm and pouncing one stiffly gloved hand on the sparkling brooch; "you've stolen that! It's bad enough to be run into by a dirty little thing fresh from Bedlam, without being wicked into the bargain. That's *too* much!"

The little black figure being too wretched to hear this tirade, could only mumble and wail and wriggle closer and closer into the folds of the rich gown.

"Get out of my dress!" cried the old lady excitedly. "Here, I'll call the police, if you don't let go of me this instant! Stop, I say! Po-o-lice!"

Viny gave one violent jerk that brought her up to her feet, and with eyes distended in terror, started in wild despair across the street. A pair of handsome bays were coming in their best step down from the Square, drawing a carriage full of people who seemed in the very best of spirits.

"*Whoa-a!*" A click, a rapid pull-up with all Thomas's best

strength, and the horses fell back on their haunches just in time for the little lithe figure to dart under their pawing hoofs and be saved! Everybody leaned out of the carriage for a glimpse of the child.

"Why—why"— A young girl's face paled, while the gray eyes flashed, and with one spring she was out and rushing after the small flying figure who in her fright had turned to flee the other way.

"Look out, Caryl!" called the others in the carriage after her.

"Oh, she'll be killed," moaned a little girl leaning out as far as she dared over the wheels.

"And then she can't ever get into the pretty new house," wailed another. "Oh, what shall we do! Come back, Bessie!" she cried, tugging at her sister's skirts. "Grandmamma, make her come into the carriage, I can't hold her!"

But a crowd of people surging up around them at this moment, took off all attention from Bessie and everybody else but the little fugitive and her kind pursuer. Caryl made her way through the crowd with flushed face, her little brown hat hanging by its strings around her neck, pantingly dragging after her the little black girl.

"It's our Viny," she said, "and something is the matter with Aunt Sylvia! Oh, Madam Grant!"

"My poor child," said a sweet-faced woman, reaching out a kind arm, while the children seized hold of Caryl at every available point, between them dragging her and her charge into shelter, "don't be troubled. Drive just as fast as you can, Thomas, to No. 27, you know," she commanded hurriedly.

Then the first thing Caryl did was to turn upon Viny and unhook the precious brooch as a low sob came from her white lips. "If it had been lost!"

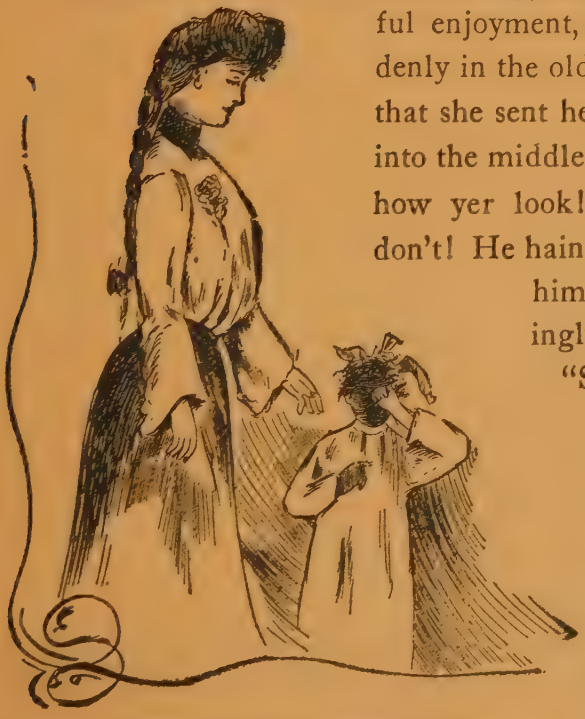
A soft hand stole under the little brown cloak to clasp her

own; but Madam Grant said never a word. She knew that the young girl's heart was too full for speech; that the mother's brooch would speak more tenderly than ever she could, of forgiveness to the little ignorant black girl.

The children were all eyes at Viny and her costume, but they said never a word while she howled on steadily, only ejaculating in an occasional gust, "O Miss Sylvy—Miss Sylvy!"

Caryl, white as a sheet, rushed out of the carriage and into the old lodging house the instant the horses paused by the broken gate. Maum Patty was singing in the little kitchen the refrain she never indulged in except in her most complacent moods. Flinging wide the door, Caryl panted out, "Oh, what is it! Tell me at once!"

"Lawks!" exclaimed Maum Patty, startled from her peaceful enjoyment, and turning so suddenly in the old calico-covered chair that she sent her spectacles spinning into the middle of the floor. "Massy, how yer look! Tain't wurth it—don't! He hain't spile't it; I stopped him," she added exultingly.



"I SHALL HAVE TO FORGIVE YOU."

"Stopped what?" echoed Caryl in bewildered distress. "Oh, do tell me! Is'nt Aunt Sylvia sick? Tell me, Maum Patty," she pleaded. And she grasped the old woman's arm in an agony of suspense.

"Massy, no!" declared Maum Patty in her most cheery tones, "she's ben a-laughin' fit to kill herself, an' I don't wonder, for the little rascal looked as cunnin' as an imp. But I stopped him—I stopped him!" she added triumphantly.

Caryl had no strength to ask further, nor to stir. The reac-

tion was too great, and she leaned up against the door for support.

"He shuck it, an' shuck it," said the old woman, laughing immoderately. "Laws, how he shuck it—dat Jip did—yer

aunt's beyeutiful cap with the new puppel ribbons! Ye see it tumbled off; I dunno wedder she sneezed, or wot she did, but anyway, it tumbled off on de flo', and dat little pison scamp jumped up from his rug an' cotched it, an' she a-callin' an'a-callin, fit ter die—I'll snake dat Viny w'en I gets her.—Lawks, but I couldn't help it! I laughed till I cried to see dat dog carry on. Luckily I run up just when I did to pay my 'specs to de Missis, for—I stopped him, I stopped him," she brought herself up to declare, wiping her eyes.

"Viny," said Caryl, in her little room, an hour after, when everything had been confessed and forgiven; when the delightful story had all come out, how they were really and truly to move that very afternoon; how Madam Grant had paid the rent in advance for the sunny rooms in the little cottage, and they were just driving around to surprise Aunt Sylvia when they witnessed Viny's escapade; how the carriage was to come before very long to take dear Aunt Sylvia to her longed-for refuge; how the price of the lessons was to go for new furniture; how everything for the rest of their lives was to be cheery, winsome, and bright to the very last degree—when it was all finished, Caryl looked kindly down into the sorry little black face—"Yes, Viny," she said with the happiest little laugh, "I shall have to forgive you, for it's the last naughty thing that you will ever do in the old home."

MARGARET SIDNEY.

Old King Cole
Was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he;
He called for his pipe,
And he called for his bowl,
And he called for his fiddlers three.

"Ding Dong bell!
Pussy's in the well!"
"Who put her in?"
"Little Tommy Green."
"Who pulled her out?"
"Big Jack Stout."
"What a naughty act was that,
To drown poor Pussy Cat!"

OUR TWO OPINIONS.

US two wuz boys when we fell out—
Nigh to the age uv my youngest now:
Don't rec'lect what t'wuz about,
Some small deef'rence, I'll allow;
Lived next neighbors twenty years,
A-hatin' each other, me 'nd Jim,—
He havin' his opinyin uv me,
'Nd I havin' my opinyin uv him.

Grew up together 'nd wouldn't speak,
Courted sisters 'nd married' em, too;
'Tended same meetin' house onct a week,
A-hatin' each other through 'nd through!
But when Abe Linkern asked the West
F'r soldiers, we answered—me 'nd Jim—
He havin' his opinyin uv me,
'Nd I havin' my opinyin uv him.

But down in Tennessee one night
There wuz sounds uv firin' far away,
'Nd the Sergeant allowed ther'd be a fight
With the Johnnie Rebs some time nex' day;
'Nd as I wuz thinkin' of Lizzie 'nd home,
Jim stood afore me, long and slim—
He havin' his opinyin uv me,
'Nd I havin' my opinyin uv him.

Seemed like we knew ther wuz goin' to be
Serious trouble f'r me and him;

OUR TWO OPINIONS.

Us two shuck hands, did Jim 'nd me.
  But never a word from me or Jim!
He went his way, 'nd I went mine,
  'Nd into the battle's roar went we—
I havin' my opinyin uv Jim,
  'Nd he havin' his opinyin uv me.

Jim never came back from the war again,
  But I haint forgot that last, last night,
When, waitin' fur orders, us two men
  Made up, 'nd shook hands afore the fight.
'Nd after it all, its soothin' to know
  That here be I, 'nd yonder's Jim—
He havin' his opinyin uv me,
  'Nd I havin' my opinion uv him.

EUGENE FIELD.